

When Theology Calls For More:
How Evangelical Churches Address the Needs of Urban Communities

By

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BA in Urban Studies
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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
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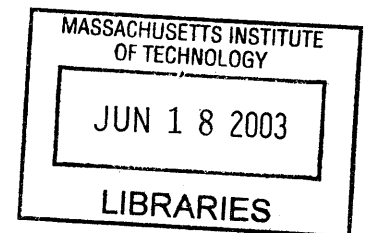
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ABSTRACT

This thesis adds to the richness of literature on faith-based organizations by focusing on a narrow subset of them – Evangelical Christian congregations in the United States. Using three Evangelical churches in the Boston area as case studies, the thesis examines how Evangelical Christian churches' theological beliefs and values impact their decisions on programming, personnel, place, political activism, partnerships, place, and people as they pursue community development activities to serve their local community. The findings from these cases will enable community-based organizations, government agencies, and funding agencies to identify opportunities for partnerships or collaborative efforts, the strengths and weaknesses of Evangelical churches with regards to service provision, and ways in which they can encourage Evangelical churches to increase their level of activity in communities.

After carefully examining the experiences of three evangelical churches in the Boston area, the thesis concludes that evangelical churches have a lot to offer their local communities and that there are opportunities for CBOs, government agencies, and other non-profits to partner with Evangelical churches to address needs in their communities. Evangelical churches are deeply interested in providing for the needs of people in their community and they are flexible about the types of services they offer and who they serve. In addition, Evangelical churches are not afraid of investing a significant amount of their resources to provide a much-needed service in the community. However, they do have firm boundaries and principles based on their theological beliefs, which are not negotiable. Consequently, organizations that seek to partner or collaborate in some way with evangelical churches to address the needs in their communities must respect those boundaries and principles.

The most feasible types of partnerships between Evangelical churches and non-Evangelical organizations are one that focus on educating congregations' about the community's needs, providing congregations concrete ideas for services, providing funding, as well many forms of informal support.

Thesis Supervisor: Langley Keyes
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INTRODUCTION

In their recently published book, Mary Jo Bane and Brent Coffin ask the poignant and direct question, “Who will provide?—for the hungry and the homeless, the widow and the orphan, the prisoner and the stranger?” in America’s communities.¹ Historically, America has looked to many different kinds of organizations to provide for the needs in urban communities – private individuals, churches, the government, non-profit organizations, community-based organizations (CBO), and partnerships between these organizations. Most recently, America has returned its attention to faith-based organizations (FBO) in hopes that they can alleviate poverty and help solve other social problems that ail America’s neighborhoods. Mary Jo Bane and her colleagues purport that religious communities are only able to fulfill their potential for providing for the needs of communities by working in partnership with other civic agencies and the government. It seems that policy-makers, financial institutions, developers, CBOs have taken the message to heart and are now trying to figure out how they can meet the challenges facing communities through collaborative efforts with FBOs. However, if civic agencies and the government are interested in forging partnerships with FBOs they are going to have to gain a better understanding of FBOs and how their distinctive qualities affect the ways in which they approach partnerships and engage in community development activities.

The Increasing Popularity of Faith-Based Organizations

In the name of efficiency and effectiveness, the federal government has been moving towards the privatization and decentralization of social service provision for the past few decades. Donald Kettle declared: “Government is relying on private partners to do public work. . . government is less the producer of goods and services, and more supervisor of proxies who do the actual work.” The government (national, state, local) engages in third-party government through “non-profitization,” whereby governments directly and indirectly rely more on not-for-profit organizations than public institutions to achieve public purposes. This policy of privatization has led to the blossoming of the non-profit sector. In 1998, there were over 1.6 million nonprofit or tax-exempt organizations in the United States and they were the third largest contributor to the nation’s GDP.² As every level of the government seeks to privatize the provision of services (with the exception of services related to homeland security) and support community-based services, FBOs are increasingly being looked to as critical and potential providers of social and community services and partners in community renewal.

¹ Mary Jo Bane and Brent Coffin. “Introduction,” Who Will Provide? ed. Mary Jo Bane, Brent Coffin, and Ronald Thiemann (Colorado: Westview Press, 2000) 1.

² “The Nonprofit World: a Statistical Portrait,” Chronicle of Philanthropy, 1998.

The enthusiasm over faith-based initiatives (FBI) comes from the growing recognition among politicians, foundations and researchers that local FBOs are not only a significant source of social services, but that FBOs may be able to add value to neighborhoods and impact people's lives in a way that secular organizations cannot. Congregations are stable community institutions. When economic investment, wealthy and middle-class households, and government agencies abandon the community due to lack of funds or interest, congregations' higher level of commitment to the community can sometimes be the only source of stability for a community. They are often the last organizations to leave a distressed community, if they leave at all. FBOs also add value by serving community members' spiritual needs and effecting individual transformation. One of the reasons underlying President Bush's recent push for the expansion of government support for FBOs seems to be based on the idea that changing individual lives through spirituality can have a more profound and lasting impact than secular social programs. Other supporters feel that addressing the spiritual needs of community members or beneficiaries of social service programs is what makes services holistic, addressing a person's mind, body, and soul.

Congregations, a subset of FBOs, have financial, human, and physical resources which can be made available to the community. Even congregations with meager financial resources can significantly contribute to the community by providing space for community meetings or incubator space for other community organizations. Congregations can also contribute volunteers, church leaders' fundraising skills, as well as the skills of other church staff to community-oriented services at little or no cost. Wealthier congregations can also be a funding source for other FBOs or community development initiatives. For example, Habitat for Humanity and GBIO have built hundreds of homes across the country using low or zero-interest loans provided by congregations.

In addition, FBOs are thought to possess several competitive advantages over secular community development corporations and social service agencies. Churches, temples, or mosques have ready access to congregational members who have a personal conviction about the importance of helping the disadvantaged. Religious institutions or their leaders often have more ties or access to political leaders, lenders, and investors than individuals in low-income, inner city neighborhoods. As a result, FBOs can use their position and connections to function as brokers of information between different levels of power and the community. Congregations whose members are mostly comprised of local residents, these religious institutions or their leaders can be particularly effective as representatives of the community to higher levels of power.³ FBOs also have an advantage when serving an organizing function. They can organize their own members and more easily earn the trust of other FBOs using their "common language"

³ Michael Leo Owens, "Pulpits and Policy: The Politics of Black Church-Based Community Development in New York City, 1980-2000," diss., State University at Albany (2001).

and common moral values, thereby bringing different people together to work towards a common goal in the interest of the community at-large.⁴

Because of the potential services and benefits that FBOs can provide communities, the federal government has adopted the Charitable Choice provision in Section 104 of the Personal Responsibility Act of 1996 and the President Bush signed two executive orders in 2001 hoping to increase FBOs level of activity in communities or their capacity. Although both Charitable Choice legislation and Bush's executive orders were designed to end discrimination against faith-based organizations and create a "level playing field" for all FBOs, Bush's executive orders went further to recognize the powerful impact FBOs were having on communities, protect FBOs rights, and support their continued work.

While his public speeches and written statements about the faith-based initiative emphasize the importance of eliminating the discrimination against faith-based and small community-based organizations and focusing on results-based awarding of governmental funds, Bush's personal beliefs are evident despite his attempts to appear neutral. President George Bush Jr. is a self-proclaimed Born-Again Christian who believes in the power of personal transformation through spiritual conversion. The examples Bush provides of organizations that have been highly successful in helping substance abusers or at-risk youth tend to be FBOs that make spiritual conversion central to their program.

The federal government is not alone in its interest in FBOs and FBIs. Foundations, research institutions, and other funding agencies have also climbed onto the bandwagon and are investing their resources into faith-based initiatives. The Pew Charitable Trust, The Hudson Institute, and Public/Private Ventures are just a few of many research organizations that have funded several research projects on FBIs and the impact of government contracts on FBOs. Harvard University sponsors an Executive Session on Faith-Based and Community Approaches to Urban Revitalization. Harvard also sponsors a Summer Leadership Institute which brings clergy, lay leaders, and community developers from across the country together so that they can share their experiences and be better equipped to serve their respective inner-city communities.

Even private financial institutions are showing interest in partnering with FBOs. The Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco (FHLBSF) launched its own FBI in 2000 and hosted a faith-based conference in November 2001 called "Expanding the Territory: A Faith-Based Conference for Affordable Housing and Economic Development". The conference was sponsored by major commercial banks like Washington Mutual, Citibank, and Bank of America. The United Way and the Boston Foundation are local examples of organizations that are directly funding faith-based initiatives. In fact, The United

⁴ Carl Koechlin, "Integrating Compassion and Pragmatism in a Successful Community Development Strategy: A Case Study of New Community Corp., Newark, NJ" thesis., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1989).

Way's "Faith-In-Action" committee only funds services provided by FBOs that include a spiritual or religious component in their programming.

Defining Community Development

For the purpose of this thesis, community development broadly defined as any activity or service that seeks to improve the quality of life of people in a community. A very broad and general definition was selected in order to capture as many of the activities that the churches in the case studies were doing to serve the broader community –people outside the church. Although this is not an exhaustive list, community development can include social service programs, educational programs including the development of schools, day care programs, emergency services, services to the elderly, housing development, economic development, and community organizing.

The Complexity of Partnerships

While the idea of having government agencies, CBOs, financial institutions, and FBOs collaborate on community development activities is inspiring because of the potential that could be unleashed by these partnerships, forming such partnerships can be complex and problematic. There is a tension between wanting to help people by providing services to those in need, and the concerns and interests of each potential partner. The government, some FBOs, and people in the community are concerned about maintaining the separation between church and state. Although there are FBOs, such as Catholic Charities, that have been receiving government funding and contracts for many years without significant public attention, the recent changes in legislation related to FBIs have raised many questions about government-funded FBIs because these new changes allow religious organizations to maintain their religious character and make more "sectarian" organizations eligible for government funding.

FBOs are uneasy about the "strings" that might be imposed on them if they enter into collaborative efforts with organizations holding different values. They are concerned that funding sources and partnering organizations will force them to compromise their values or lose their prophetic voice. Some FBOs feel that partnering with the government will compromise their role as a moral voice in communities. In addition, some FBOs, having a general distrust of the government and politics, would preferably avoid government funds. FBOs are also concerned about the government exercising an unhealthy amount of influence over religious institutions.

Others organizations have reservations about FBOs increased role in community development for a multitude of reasons. Researchers are concerned that requirements accompanying government funding or changes that FBOs will have to make in order to run larger service programs will ultimately cause FBOs to lose the characteristics that make their programs innovative, grassroots, personal, and therefore

distinctly different from government provided programs. Many people against FBIs are concerned about discrimination against potential employees and beneficiaries, and having vulnerable people in need of help subjected to proselytization.

The Problem

In an effort to understand these tensions and separate unfounded fears or assertions from legitimate ones, researchers have performed several studies over the past few decades. The recent hype around faith-based initiatives has resulted in a rash of studies in the past few years which sought to determine whether FBOs have any competitive advantages when compared to secular service providers, whether there is a difference in the religious content of the programming between secular organizations and FBOs, whether FBOs require their staff to share the same faith, and whether FBOs are forced to compromise their faiths or values to obtain government funding. There have been some new studies supporting the theory that faith-based programs are more effective than secular organizations in helping at-risk youth, reducing recidivism, and substance abusers; however, the findings have been mixed, particularly with regards to the religious content in the programs, FBOs opinions on partnering with the government, and FBOs hiring practices. As a result, the existing literature on FBOs does little to elucidate truth from myth and has not helped the debate on faith-based initiatives move forward.

The inconsistency in the findings may be a function of the fact that most of the research performed on FBOs lump them all together, making no distinction between the responses or behavior of particular types of FBOs. While there is some information available on the experiences of African-American churches and some very successful CDC's that are affiliated with a particular church or have become parachurch organizations, very little is known about why congregations make certain decisions. There is insufficient information on why congregations choose not to tackle community development issues, what factors have enabled other congregations to develop and sustain service programs, or why they make certain programming decisions.⁵ Although research suggests that FBOs are willing to enter into partnerships, accept funding, or pursue activities that allow them to carry out their mission and do not interfere or conflict with their basic religious principles, it has yet to reveal what this really means and identify where the boundaries lie. There is a wide variety of values and theological beliefs among different religions and different types of FBOs, which could result in very different approaches to responding to the needs in their communities, government funding, and partnership opportunities.

⁵ Avis Vidal, Faith-Based Organizations in Community Development (U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, 2001)

If the government, CBOs, financial institutions, and other civic organizations are going to look to FBOs for social services and community development activities in urban communities they are going to have to gain a better understanding of how the theological beliefs and values of different FBOs impact their view of community involvement, how they approach partnerships with government agencies and other organizations, and what factors are influencing their decisions. Only then, will policy-makers and community actors begin to understand the implications of their policies, the differences in responses and outcomes they observe when examining faith-based initiatives, and offer FBOs the kinds of partnerships or opportunities that appeal to their specific interests.

Focusing on Evangelical Christian Churches

This thesis will add to the richness of faith-based literature by examining how Evangelical Christian churches' distinctive theological beliefs and values impact the nature of their involvement in community development activities, and how they pursue and implement them. Using three Evangelical churches in the Boston area as case studies, the thesis reveals how Evangelical churches' theological views and values impact their decisions related to programming, personnel, place, political activism and advocacy, partnerships, place, people, and the religious content. This information will enable CBOs, government agencies, and funding agencies to better understand the opportunities for partnerships or collaborative efforts, the strengths and weaknesses of Evangelical churches with regards to service provision, and identify ways in which they can encourage a higher level of activity among evangelical churches in their communities.

Although it is difficult to develop a definition of Evangelical Christian churches with which everyone agrees, many pastors, seminarians, and researchers seem to agree that evangelic churches are churches that hold all four of the following values:

1. High view of scriptural authority. Belief in the inerrancy of the Bible.
2. Individual's need for conversion and consequent development of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ
3. Focus on salvation only through believing in Jesus Christ's sacrificial death on the cross
4. Imperative to evangelize.⁶

A church must hold all four values in order to be an evangelical church. Many Christian churches hold some or at least of one of these values, but do not agree with the all four values and are consequently not evangelical churches. Because evangelicalism arose in reaction against fundamentalism, "evangelicalism is also characterized by the following three distinctives: a concern to do greater justice to the social

⁶ Dr. Gordon Hugenberger, Senior Pastor, Park Street Church, Personal interview, 11 Feb. 2003 and Dr. John C. Green, Director, Bliss Institute for Applied Politics, Personal interview, 3 Mar. 2003.

implications of the Gospel; an avoidance of extra-Biblical lists of do's and don'ts and anti-intellectualism; a desire to unite with other Christians with whom evangelical churches agree concerning the major Christian doctrines.”⁷

It is important to note that evangelical churches are not a denomination. The “term” evangelical simply describes the core tenets of the church. Consequently, it is difficult to identify evangelical congregations by denomination even though it is highly unlikely for congregations of certain denominations to meet the criteria listed above. Churches that have “evangelical” in their names may or may not be evangelical.

I have chosen to focus on Evangelical churches in urban communities because these types of churches are a growing force in urban communities and their interest in serving the needs of their local communities is growing as well. There has been an “awakening” among the evangelical churches in Philadelphia and several urban areas across the United States resulting in a growing interest in urban or “mercy” ministry and consequently community development activities. Several national evangelical organizations are encouraging churches to get involved in community development, poverty alleviation, and social justice issues. Simultaneously, some evangelical churches are intentionally locating in urban areas and planting additional churches in their cities because of their interest in meeting the needs of urban communities, and making involvement in their communities and intervening on behalf of the disadvantaged a critical part of their mission or vision statements. In addition, many of the new ethnic churches in urban areas are evangelical churches.

Not only are evangelical churches growing in size and number, but evangelical churches have the capacity to create and sustain community development activities. They have growing or at least have stable financial resources while the coffers of many mainline churches and the Catholic Churches are in decline or are in jeopardy. The ethnic evangelical churches have the additional advantage of being able to legitimately represent the residents of urban communities and design programs that are culturally sensitive.

It is also critical to study evangelical churches because they are on one extreme of the spectrum and many of the commonly listed dilemmas related to FBIs are extremely relevant when discussing potential partnerships between government agencies, CBOs and evangelical churches. Evangelical churches consistently demand full control over their hiring requirements because they place a high value on hiring people who share the same faith. Their theological beliefs lead them to take a conservative position on controversial issues such as gay rights, which influences their hiring practices. Evangelical Christian churches are perceived as “sectarian” FBOs with which opponents of FBIs are particularly

⁷ “Common Questions, 12 May 2003,
< <http://www.parkstreet.org/info/questions.shtml>>

uncomfortable. By their chosen identity as “Evangelicals” they communicate the high value they place on sharing their faith. Evangelicals also have a narrow definition of personal salvation which many “outsiders” consider exclusive. Consequently, there are many questions regarding the feasibility and desirability of partnerships between Evangelical congregations, government agencies, and CBOs and questions about Evangelical congregations’ future role, if any, in community development in urban communities.

After carefully examining the experiences of three evangelical churches in the Boston area, I have found that evangelical churches have a lot to offer their local communities and that there are opportunities for CBOs, government agencies, and other non-profits to partner with evangelical churches to meet the needs of residents in their communities. Evangelical churches are deeply interested in providing for the needs of people in their community and they are flexible with regards to the types of services they offer and who they serve. In addition, evangelical churches are not afraid of investing a significant amount of its resources to provide a much-needed service in the community. However, they do have firm boundaries and principles based on their theological beliefs, which are not negotiable. Consequently, organizations that seek to partner or collaborate in some way with evangelical churches to address the needs in their communities must respect those boundaries and principles.

Methodology

This thesis attempts to look closely at the experiences and perspective of 3 evangelical churches in the Boston area to gain an understanding of how their theological views, organizational structure, and local surroundings shape the way in which these churches participate in activities that address the needs of residents in their local community. A list of evangelical churches was identified through recommendations from Evangelicals for Social Action, a national association for evangelical organizations, and Emmanuel Gospel Center, a local training and research center for churches in Boston, and other evangelical churches in the area.

The churches selected for the case studies were self-selected as they were the churches that agreed to participate in the study. Interestingly, the case studies are located in different parts of Boston, vary in size and age, and its congregants vary in ethnic composition and income bracket. Information was gathered about the churches through face-to-face interviews with church staff and congregation members who were responsible for some of the services offered by the churches from January through late April. At least four people from each church and a total of 13 people were interviewed from the churches. Follow up interviews were also conducted with at least one pastor or high-level staff person from each church in April.

General information on the faith-based initiative and evangelical churches was gathered by reviewing existing literature on the internet and local libraries and interviews. Some of the people interviewed included a researcher who is in the midst of conducting research on evangelical churches' civic engagement and a scholar who has written several books on evangelical churches' social services activities and governmental regulations that impact faith-based initiatives.

CHAPTER 1

SETTING THE CONTEXT

FBOs have been receiving considerable attention from the federal government and consequently foundations, academic and research institutions for the work they have been doing in communities and their potential to become a much larger player in the government's vision to privatize the provision of social services to America's disadvantaged. FBOs have many characteristics that are attractive to government agencies and community organizations that are trying to improve the quality of life in a neighborhood or trying to implement anti-poverty programs. The expectations of FBOs come from three sources: the idea that FBOs might be able to provide people in need holistic and individualized care that government agencies and perhaps secular organizations cannot provide; the assumption that FBOs have been able to accomplish so much using private funds and on such small budgets have been particularly appealing in a time when financial resources are scarce; and a feeling that traditional social service programs or community development efforts have failed to produce the promised results.

Why Faith-Based Organizations Are So Popular

CBOs have become extremely popular because they possess many of the qualities that have come to be associated with efficient and effective provision of social services: they are small, grassroots organizations that provide services that are tailored to local needs. Since the Reagan Administration there has been a consistent policy of devolution and decentralization. In the name of efficiency and provision of higher quality services, the government has been marching forward to downsize and privatize, and it has never looked back. The government has outsourced some of its functions to private for-profit corporations, and most of its contracts with third-party organizations for the provision of social services have gone to non-profit corporations. As a result, the government is almost single-handedly responsible for the explosion in the number of non-profit corporations in America.

FBOs are now being added to the government's artillery of strategies to fight poverty, moral decay, and other social problems. For decades, FBOs, especially congregations, are local institutions that have been providing programs and services that are grass-roots, privately funded, and independent from the government. According to Ram A. Cnaan, congregations have functioned like an "invisible caring hand" much like the Adam Smith's "invisible hand", quietly providing much needed services and helping millions of people on their own initiative, using private resources, and providing services free of charge:

Using Smith's idea of the invisible hand in a country that espouses the strongest belief in free-market principles, we were amazed to discover that welfare and social care are also provided by an invisible hand: a caring hand driven by religious gatherings and theologies. . . Only an invisible, caring motivation. . . can describe the work of religious congregations in ameliorating the pain, suffering, and poverty of millions.⁸

Cnaan's research calculates the net value of the social services provided by an average congregation at \$15,307 per month or approximately \$184,000⁹ a year.

Another reason for FBOs popularity is the discovery that congregations are usually the strongest, indigenous institutions in otherwise disadvantaged communities. Whether congregations have remained in communities based on their commitment to that particular community or their inability to move, congregations are often the only institutions that remain in communities that have experienced a prolonged and severe period of disinvestment. "In urban areas such as South Central Los Angeles, churches and liquor stores are virtually the only neighborhood institutions that remain."¹⁰ It is one of the reasons why organizers like Lew Finfer of Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) particularly targets and likes working with congregations. Given congregations' institutional strengths and advantages communities possess a tremendous resource that is stable. However, their staying power is far from the only institutional advantage that congregations bring to communities.

Regardless of the financial resources of a congregation, congregations hold a wealth of resources that could benefit a community. Most congregations have a cross-section of talents among their members that can be tapped such as bankers, realtors, doctors, social workers, and teachers. The clergy themselves are often talented public speakers, highly trained and educated, professional leaders who have clout in the community. Congregations almost always have the resource of space that they can make available to the community for meetings or to other organizations for the delivery of a wide variety of services at minimal or no cost.

Congregations' organizational strengths have enabled them to make significant contributions to communities by strengthening other community organizations such as CDCs, new religious nonprofits, or new initiatives. Already having 501(c)(3) status, churches are positioned to initiate projects and then establish other non-profits. According to research performed by Denise Nitterhouse in 1997, new small religious nonprofits that had close ties to a parent organizations like churches were much more viable than their secular counterparts because the church or parent organization provided a pool of volunteers with a

⁸ Ram A. Cnaan, The Invisible Caring Hand: American Congregations and the Provision of Welfare (New York: New York University Press, 2000) 8.

⁹ Cnaan's estimate is based on a study he performed in which he interviewed 250 congregations across the United States. This figure is based on the value of church staff time, value of volunteer man hours, in-kind support, cost of utilities used, and value of space used for the services.

¹⁰ R.J. Sonenshein, "The Battle Over Liquor Stores in South Central Los Angeles: The Management of an Interminority Conflict," Urban Affairs Review 31, no/ 6 1996: 710-737.

shared faith, commitment to the activity, meeting space, office equipment, free mailing and telephone services and other in-kind support, initial program expertise, management support, visibility, possibly start-up funds.¹¹ Julian Wolpert also found that “small religious nonprofits he studied were more stable than their secular counterparts. . . their ability to tap the parent organizations for funds, their lower salary base and administrative costs, their effective recruitment of volunteers, and locally resident board members”¹²

Pastors as individuals or as representatives of their congregation bring integrity and credibility to community development initiatives or advocacy efforts which enables them to draw the support of the broader community. “Among the institutional advantages it brings to bear on community revitalization, public esteem is an important resource, particularly when religious leaders negotiate with public officials or attempt to form coalitions across institutional boundaries.”¹³ The clergy, by virtue of their chosen profession, are generally more respected and trusted by members of the community and can leverage their position to draw people in the community together and motivate them to take action. At a time when “Trust in representative forms of democracy has declined so precipitously that individuals no longer respond in large numbers to narrow appeals based on electoral politics. Voter turnout of all levels of government is exceedingly low. However, individuals still respond to the moral authority of the church.”¹⁴

Faith and denominational links give inner-city churches the ability to build even larger coalitions and access additional political and financial resources by using their ties to bring in more affluent suburban churches. These connections give FBOs the appearance of a large constituency that is difficult for politicians to ignore. For these reasons, congregations may be in the best position to leverage the trust people place in them and their connections for the benefit of the broader community.

Beyond the concrete services and organizational assets that FBOs can provide, foundations and the government recognize that religious organizations and their programs can provide something that secular organizations cannot: the transformative power of faith that can change the individual and inspire the faith-community to unmatched acts of generosity and service to the needy. President Bush often refers to Teen Challenge and Prison Fellowship Ministries (PFM) as examples of FBOs that have been able to effectively help people with drug additions and reduce crime. These FBOs are organizations that

¹¹ Denise Nitterhouse, “Financial Management and Accountability in Small, Religiously Affiliated Nonprofit Organizations.” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 26. 1997.

¹² Wolpert, Julian. “The Role of Small Religious Nonprofits in Changing Urban Neighborhoods.” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 26. 1997.

¹³ Meredith Ramsay, “Redeeming the City: Exploring the Relationship between Church and Metropolis” *New England Journal of Public Policy* 2000: 7-31.

¹⁴ Ramsay, 24.

attribute their success to the power of faith. Teen Challenges' website states, "While our program is structured to teach responsibility and discipline, along with job skills and even GED completion, a personal relationship with Jesus Christ permeates everything we do. . .and that is life changing. . . Take that away from Teen Challenge, and it will be no more successful than the typical drug rehab center with its low success rates."¹⁵ Like Teen Challenge, PFM considers faith a key component to its success. Chuck Colson, the founder of PFM, stated, "Prisons aren't going to stop the crime problem, no matter, how tough you get. Because crime is the result of a breakdown of moral values. It springs from the human heart."¹⁶ Chuck Colson has long argued that crime is fundamentally a moral and spiritual problem that requires a moral and spiritual solution.

In addition to helping individuals by nurturing personal transformation through a conversionary experience, some feel that congregations are in the unique position to have an impact on the larger community because they uphold values that promote community, generosity, service, and moral living. West contends that by emphasizing human agency, the prophetic church instills hope and keeps alive the notion that "history is incomplete, and the world is unfinished, and the future is open-ended and what we think and what we can do can make a difference. . . I do believe that prophetic churches, prophetic mosques, prophetic synagogues, can all play a fundamental role in nurturing children by transmitting non-market values. . love, care, service to others, sacrifice, risk, community, struggles for justice, solidarity, all of these are non-market values against a market culture."¹⁷ By believing in and communicating these values, congregations can provide hope and inspiration for people to make changes in their lives and in their communities. Because of their focus on personal transformation, FBOs are recognized for their intentional focus and ability to nurture each individual holistically.

Ethnic congregations are a subset of FBOS that have a special potential to impact the lives and communities of people of color. They have caught the attention of the government, foundations, and community organizations because of the key roles they play in the lives of immigrants and people of color and the potential they possess to have an even greater impact in their communities. African-American churches have a long history of community engagement and providing social services in African-American communities: when discrimination was rampant, African-American churches were sometimes the only source of social services, leadership and advocacy in African American communities. Ethnic churches also have a special function in urban communities today, particularly for those immigrants who

¹⁵ "Teen Challenge National Director Welcomes Faith-based Debate, 5 Apr. 2001, 15 Apr. 2003
<<http://www.teenchallenge.com/faithbasedpressrelease.htm>>

¹⁶ "About PFM, 14 May 2003
<<http://www.pfm.org/PrisonFellowship/ChannelRoot/WelcomeGroup/AboutPFM/>>

¹⁷ Cornel West, Prophetic Thought in Postmodern Times: Beyond Eurocentrism and Multiculturalism, 1993, 6.

face language barriers or do not have other connections in the community. In some cultures, it is not socially acceptable to receive public assistance or go the government for help. However, they do feel comfortable approaching a church or other house of worship, knowing that there will be someone there who speaks the same language and will be able to provide sound guidance and advice.

Even churches that do not have a formal social service program are important institutions for ethnic immigrants. Pastors of churches have been known to help people find an apartment, accompany people to government offices to complete paperwork for services, and serve as a translator during important transactions. Ethnic congregations are also important institutions for CBOs and government agencies seeking to impact neighborhoods because pastors are often well-respected and are seen as people in positions of authority in many cultures. Consequently, bringing a respected pastor on board as a partner in an initiative or getting the pastoral staff of an ethnic church to promote certain issues could have a large impact on the ethnic community.

Researchers have identified several factors that most influence whether a congregation will engage in community development, which includes both brick and mortar development and the provision of social services. Larger congregations, especially congregations with more than 900 members are more likely to get involved in community development activities because they have more paid staff, larger pool of volunteers, and more contributors and therefore funding. African-American congregations are significantly more likely to participate than white congregations¹⁸: congregations with more than 80% African American are significantly more likely to apply for government funding to support social services.¹⁹ Most scholars feel that African-America churches' historical role as a service provider and advocate for African-Americans as well as the high levels of poverty among African-Americans have made them more open to dealing with the government and providing social services.²⁰ Finally, studies have found that the extent to which a congregation engages in service activities is heavily influenced by the interests and tendencies of its leadership²¹ or a person in the congregation who is committed to community development activities.²²

¹⁸ Chaves, Mark, and Lynn Higgins, "Comparing the Community Involvement of Black and White Congregations." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 31 1992: 425-440

¹⁹ Mark Chaves, Religious Congregations and Welfare Reform: Who will Take Advantage of Charitable Choice? (Washington, DC: Aspen Institute, 1998)

²⁰ Mark Chaves and William Tsitsos, "Congregations and Social Services: What they Do, How They Do It, and With Whom," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action. (December, 2000)

²¹ Vidal

²² Jeremy Nowak, et al. Religious Institutions and Community Renewal. Philadelphia (Deleware: The Delaware Valley Community Reinvestment Fund, 1989).

There is some disagreement with regards to the influence of the income level and the theological orientation of a congregation on its level of engagement in community development activities. Some researchers have concluded that a high percentage of low-income people in the congregation is a strong indicator of whether a congregation will engage in community development activities. A study by Chaves and Tsitsos indicates that congregations in neighborhoods in which more than 30% of the residents have incomes below the poverty line report more service programs than congregations in other neighborhoods.²³ However, other research shows that having sufficient income to support community development activities is a better predictor of social service provision than the presence of low-income members in the congregation.²⁴

Another disputed factor is theological and political orientation. Most people believe that the theologically and politically oriented liberal congregations are more likely to engage in social services. However, Cnaan found that there is no difference in the level of community development activity between liberal and conservative congregations. He feels that the difference in previous studies may be attributable to the differences in terminology used by different congregations that was not picked up by surveys: many congregations do not consider many of their activities “social service programs”.

According to Rainbow Research’s Inc’s study of 28 religious institutions, the main contributing factors in FBO’s decision to get involved in community development activities were related to theology and compassion. Rainbow Research found that many FBOs see it as a mandate of their faith as expressed in the Biblical commandment, “Love you neighbor as yourself.” There was also a strong desire to bring the Kingdom of God, as they understood it, closer to the people around them and saw community development projects as ways to demonstrate God’s love for all people. Another strong motivator was the desire to respond to the problems or needs they saw in the community around them.²⁵ Community development activities are also seen as a way to help members to live out their faith by contributing their time and talents.

The Federal Government’s Faith-Based Initiative

Because of all the benefits that FBOs have been able to provide to communities, particularly with regards to poverty-alleviation and youth oriented programs, the federal government adopted Charitable Choice legislation in 1996 to maximize the involvement of faith-based organizations in the delivery of

²³ Chaves And Tsitsos

²⁴ Avis

²⁵ Scheie, David, et al. “Better Together: Religious Institutions as Partners in Community-Based Development.” Final Evaluation Report on the Lilly Endowment Program. (Minneapolis: The Rainbow Research, Inc.: 1991) 32.

government-funded welfare services.²⁶ Charitable Choice is a provision contained in Section 104 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWOR) welfare legislation signed by President Clinton. The provision's three goals were to encourage states to expand the involvement of community and faith-based organizations in anti-poverty programs, protect the religious integrity and character of faith-based organizations that accept government funds to provide services to the poor, and protect the religious freedom of the people who either accept or reject the services of religious organizations.

Section 104 of the PRWOR established four basic rules. It required states that distribute federal welfare funds to independent-sector providers. Either through contracts or vouchers, to deliver social services they must comply with the Charitable Choice and cannot discriminate against faith-based providers. This regulation applies to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplementary Security Income (SSI), food stamps, and Medicaid programs. The government cannot censor or require changes in the expression or identity of faith-based organizations selected to provide government-financed social services. Faith-based providers cannot discriminate against beneficiaries based on their religion or require beneficiaries to actively participate in religious practices. Finally, beneficiaries who refuse to receive social services from an FBO have the right to obtain services from a different provider.

Although Charitable Choice legislation was enacted in 1996, little seemed to have changed for faith-based organizations pursuing government funding by 2001. Consequently, President George Bush issued two executive orders on January 29, 2001 addressing the Federal government's support of faith-based organizations. Executive Order 13198 created Centers for Faith-Based & Community Initiatives in five cabinet departments²⁷ to begin the process of removing unnecessary barriers to collaboration between the Federal Government and FBOs and CBOs when such collaborations are in the public interest. In his forward, President Bush emphasized that the focus of these executive orders was to create a level playing field for organizations that seek government funding for social services programs. He said, "Our aim is equal opportunity for such groups, a level playing field, a fair chance for them to participate when their programs are successful. We will encourage Federal agencies to continue to become more hospitable to grassroots and small-scale programs, both secular and faith-based, because they have unique strengths that government can't duplicate."²⁸

The following August, the five cabinet departments issued a joint report which found that "many Federal policies and practices – including regulations, guidelines, program materials, decision-making

²⁶“A Guide to Charitable Choice, 25 Mar 2003

<<http://www.cpjustice.org>>

²⁷ Health and Human Services (HHS), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Education (ED), Labor (DOL), and Justice (DOJ)

criteria, awards-committee viewpoints, etc – go well beyond sensible constitutional restrictions and what the courts have required, sharply restricting the equal opportunity for faith-based charities to seek and receive Federal support to serve their communities.”²⁹ Some of barriers identified included: faith-based organizations were excluded from funding; excessive restrictions on religious activities; inappropriate expansions of religious restrictions to new programs; denial of FBOs’ established right to take religion into account in employment decisions; thwarting charitable choice; an improper bias in favor of previous grantees.

The removal of the barriers that kept FBOs from garnering government funding for their service programs and the favorable attention FBOs have been receiving from private foundations have come at an opportune time. There is some evidence that FBOs, particularly congregations, are facing the harsh realities of financial shortfalls and a decrease in volunteerism. Even though the congregations’ desire to provide services to the community is still strong, their capacity to take action is diminishing. The statistics on the state of religious congregations in America indicate that congregations’ financial and human resources are dwindling and that their ability to reach out to communities and invest their resources to causes beyond their own survival may no longer exist:

The day is gone when churches can also build hospitals, nursing homes, retirement communities, and colleges. More and more people are dependent on churches for emergency meals, shelter, and counseling. But many churches are devoting meager sums to these efforts and many needs are going unmet. Churches still enlist the help of large numbers of unpaid volunteers to teach classes, mow the lawn, visit the sick and paint the belfry. But many parishioners are already working harder than ever before and have little energy left for other commitments.³⁰

According to Robert Wuthnow some churches are so financially constrained that their pastors’ salary increases have been postponed for many years. While the absolute value of the contributions to the religious organizations is high, those contributions are a smaller percentage of families’ incomes than they were in the past. Contributions have dropped from 3.5% of families’ incomes in the late 1960 to 2.5% in the 1990s.³¹ Ram A. Cnaan’s recent study on congregations found that only 17.1% of congregations reported themselves as financially strong, while 10.9% said they were struggling and 28.3% of the congregations had budget deficits.³²

²⁸ “Foreward by President George W. Bush, 9 Mar 2003 <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/reports/faith-based/.html>>

²⁹The White House Unlevel Playing Field: Barriers to Participation by Faith-Based and Community Organizations in Federal Social Service Programs (Washington, DC: The White House, 2001) 11.

³⁰ Wuthnow, Robert, The Crisis in the Churches: Spiritual Malaise, Fiscal Woe (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 4.

³¹ Wuthnow, 226.

³² Cnaan, 51.

Wuthnow attributes churches' weakened financial stability to economic factors and congregation members' decision to redirect their contributions to other organizations. Congregational members are giving smaller percentages of their income because they are financially strapped or less certain about their future income.³³ Wuthnow also found that giving within "mainline" denominations had declined partly because members were redirecting their contributions away from bureaucratized national agencies such as their denominational organizations to smaller, special purpose groups.³⁴ There is also a sense that the membership of mainline Protestant churches has also been shrinking, which diminishes mainline churches' financial resources and ability to finance service programs. According to Ronald Theimann, "Given the declining membership in most "mainline" Protestant denominations, voluntary contributions are also diminishing in these bodies. While these national organizations give no indication of reducing their commitment to social services, it is unlikely that they will direct additional revenues to these activities in the near future."³⁵

The Dilemma's and Problematic Issues

Despite all of the excitement about FBOs, the advantages that literature on FBOs and faith-based initiatives tout, and the mutual benefits that partnerships between government agencies and FBOs can provide to communities there is still a lot of controversy surrounding governmental support of FBOs and FBOs increased role in the provision of social services. Although FBOs and government agencies recognize that partnering could enable them to help more people, there is a considerable amount of uneasiness about such partnerships based on the belief that there needs to be a separation between church and state. Some people still believe that government/FBO partnerships would violate the first amendment establishment clause³⁶, regardless of the protections built in to legislation regulating the relationship between the government and FBOs for beneficiaries, the government, or the FBO.

Opposition to the faith-based initiative has grown since Charitable Choice legislation and H.R.7 were passed by Congress because these regulations enabled more religious expression and no longer required that congregations form a separate 501(c)(3) to be eligible for government funding. Some are concerned that government/FBO partnerships will result in government promotion or sponsorship of

³³ Wuthnow, 226.

³⁴ Wuthnow, 14-17.

³⁵ Ronald Theimann, Samuel Herring, and Betsy Perabo, "Responsibilities and Risks for Faith-Based Organizations," *Who Will Provide*, ed. Mary Jo Bane, Brent Coffin, and Ronald Thiemann (Colorado: Westview Press, 2000) 58.

³⁶ Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

specific religions or religious beliefs. “The Secular Left insists that the re-emergence of public religion poses grave dangers for society. . . Those regard religion as “the problem” find their fears justified by those who proclaim religion to be ‘the answer’.”³⁷

Some members of the faith-community are concerned that Government funding of FBOs will result in the cooptation of religious organizations or lead to unhealthy interference and or influence by the government over religious institutions. Others, like Mary Jo Bane, are just trying to keep government and FBOs from negatively impacting the other. Mary Jo Bane wrote:

These freedoms need to be guaranteed not because religion and government are separate, but precisely because they are so intertwined. At best the idea of separation identifies a single aspect of the relationship between the two entities; namely, that neither institution should exercise final authority over the values, beliefs, and practices of the other.³⁸

Scholars are concerned that government funding of FBOs will lead to the loss of the very characteristics that make services provided by FBO so effective such as their lack of bureaucracy, individualized service, innovation. Their fears are not unfounded. Contrary to the results of initial studies, recent research of several scholars shows that even secular non-profit organizations unconcerned with having to compromise their religious and theological identity, have found dependence on government funds burdensome and threatening to their organizational autonomy.³⁹ Much of non-profits’ loss of autonomy is strongly related to their dependence on governmental funds to sustain their organization. “The nonprofit sector . . . conforms to governmental expectation of service modes, standards, and client selection, and bends its internal structures toward ably performing as contracting partners.”⁴⁰ The increasing competition among non-profits is allowing government agencies to be even more selective and demanding which will only exacerbate the problem.⁴¹

Steven Smith and Michael Lipsky found evidence that government contracting led to the bureaucratization of many nonprofits because they agreed to serve needier clients than they normally would serve to win government contracts and consequently had to replace volunteers with hired professional staff because volunteers were not qualified to help the “needier clients”.⁴² There is also some speculation that hiring professional staff to deliver their services will sour the spirit of volunteers among congregation members and ultimately result in a decline in volunteerism, especially if volunteers are not being paid to do the same work as organizations’ paid staff. The increased reliance on professional staff

³⁷ Bane and Coffin, 3.

³⁸ Theimann, 65.

³⁹ Peter Frumkin, “After Partnership: Rethinking Public-Nonprofit Relations,” *Who Will Provide?* ed. Mary Jo Bane, Brent Coffin, and Ronald Thiemann (Colorado: Westview Press, 2000) 201.

⁴⁰ Steven Rathgeb Smith and Michael Lipsky, *Nonprofits for Hire: The Welfare State in the Age of Contracting* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

⁴¹ Frumkin, 203.

is a serious concern for some who believe that it will lead to the loss of the direct, face-to-face compassionate care that is provided by volunteers, which is considered one of the most distinctive benefits of services provided by FBOs.

However, a recent study that looked specifically at the impacts of government funding on faith-based organizations and their programming concluded that FBOs found their partnerships with the government very positive. Amy L. Sherman and John Green who conducted a study on the experiences of government-funded faith-based programs in 15 states found that:

Charitable choice is working. . . FBOs are not having to sell their souls for government money. These FBOs that care about their organizational distinctiveness and expressing their faith through their service have crafted strategies allowing them to do so, while simultaneously complying with charitable choice restrictions. . . moreover, clients now have more choices: charitable choice has broadened the network of agencies engaged in providing social services and government funding has allowed FBOs to expand and add to their programs.”⁴³

The government funding made a significant impact on FBOs ability to serve the needy with few negative impacts on their organizational mission or quality of their programs. Eighty-seven percent of the faith-based contractors indicated that contract funds enabled them to serve more clients. Sixty-eight percent reported that the contract underwrote a new program, and 76% said that the government contract enabled them to add a new component or enhance existing service. Fewer than 6% of the contractors agreed with commonly expressed fears, including that public money will compromise FBOs’ religious mission, displace private funds, or limit FBOs’ ability to criticize the government.

Discrimination is another significant concern for people on both sides of the fence, but for different reasons. The establishment clause has given religious institutions autonomy in their hiring practices, including the freedom to select staff who share the same religious beliefs and practices. However, government funding of FBOs and their service programs raises many questions about the “discriminatory” practices of some FBOs. Recent legislation has protected FBOs rights to select staff who share the same religious values. Vice President Dick Cheney explained, “There is no federal law barring discrimination against gays and lesbians, and there are provisions in federal law that exempt religious groups from civil rights requirements that violate their creeds.” However, legislation requires FBOs to comply with other local anti-discrimination laws if they accept government funding. Twelve states and more than 100 cities and counties have laws to protect homosexuals. The lack of clarity on whether religious groups administering social programs with public money in these cities and states are

⁴² Smith and Lipsky

⁴³ Green, John C. and Amy L. Sherman, Fruitful Collaborations: A Survey of Government-Funded Faith-Based Programs in 15 States (Washington, DC: The Hudson Institute, 2002) 46.

bound by those laws makes religious organizations whose theology does not condone homosexuality or support gay rights skeptical about accepting government funding.

People who support gay rights are uncomfortable with the idea that organizations receiving government funding may be allowed to discriminate against homosexuals, regardless of the rights the first amendment provides FBOs. They consider the government funding provided to these organizations as their personal tax dollars and they believe that tax dollars, which are also collected from homosexuals, should not be used to help organizations that discriminate against people based on their sexual orientation.

There is also a general concern about FBOs becoming a larger player in the provision of social services to communities because of the fear that FBOs will deny assistance to people who do not share the same religious beliefs. There is also a fear that sectarian FBOs will take advantage of their position to coerce beneficiaries into religious conversion. Such practices are documented in 1992 in Marvin Olasky's book, The Tragedy of American Compassion, in which Olasky claims that only people willing to undergo religious transformation were given assistance. Although Charitable Choice legislation and Bush's initiatives address both concerns by prohibiting FBOs that receive government-funded for its services to discriminate against beneficiaries and by requiring that beneficiaries of services from such organizations must have secular alternatives, both issues are still serious concerns held by those against federal funding of FBOs.

Another fear is that increasing FBOs role in the provision of services and community engagement will result in a reduction in the government's sense of responsibility to address social welfare issues, and, correspondingly, their involvement in poverty alleviation . "It enables government on all levels to wash its hands of caring for and helping the needy and uses the heroic efforts of faith-based organizations funded by the public sector as the fig leaf to cover its own diminished role in this sector."⁴⁴ Those who are distrustful of the government's move to support FBOs fear that the government will use the increased role of FBOs in social service provision as an excuse to reduce or eliminate government funding of social service and community development programs.

Some FBOs are also concerned that the government is going to expect FBOs to solve the problems of poverty and every other social problem when they know it is impossible for them to do so and it is not their primary role or purpose. While poverty alleviation and helping the people in their community are important goals, churches', synagogues', mosques', and temples' first and foremost goal is to be houses of worship and places of religious instruction, not social service providers or community development corporations.

While FBOs do share some common characteristics that make them particularly well-suited for community development or social service provision, the reality is that the term FBO is an umbrella term

for organizations that are vastly different and need to be acknowledged and understood as we contemplate the future role of FBOs in addressing the many needs of communities. Beyond their differences in size, location, constituency which could impact their effectiveness or ability to become active in their communities, different FBOs have different theological beliefs, values, structures, and goals that can profoundly impact their motivation for engaging the community, the way in which they interact with other organizations and the community, and the manner in which they provide services.

By failing to acknowledge these differences, most of the literature on FBOs has failed to elucidate the implications of these differences on the ways in which different FBOs select the types of activities in which they get involved, their partners, funding sources, staff, and volunteers. The existing literature also fails to identify the strengths and weaknesses that different kinds of FBOs might bring to the table or whether their sets of interests vary. There are many differences in the theological beliefs among Protestant churches alone that result in very different world-views that shape their engagement in communities.

The Beliefs and Tendencies of Several Types of Christian Churches

Fundamentalists

The Fundamentalists are a subgroup of Protestants that hold the beliefs and values promoted during the Fundamentalist Movement in the early 1900s. The name of the movement came from the series of 12 books that were published from 1910-1915 called “*The Fundamentals: A Testimony of the Truth*”. The “fundamentals” discussed in these books are beliefs that fundamentalists believed should be held by all true Christians.

- The infallibility and inspiration of Scripture (also known as the doctrine of inerrancy)
- The virgin birth of Christ and the Deity of Christ.
- The substitutionary death of Jesus Christ for sinners and the blood atonement.
- The bodily resurrection of Christ and His visible return to earth
- Evangelical understanding of justification (five solas)⁴⁵ – summarized as salvation by grace that comes through faith in Jesus Christ alone

The movement’s goal was to counter the growing liberalism in society and American churches. As a result, Fundamentalists tended to draw sharp lines on issues that they felt were necessary to defend their faith. Fundamentalists supported formal laws such as Prohibition and Sunday “blue laws and

⁴⁴ Cnann

⁴⁵ Protestants during the Protestant Reformation believed that justification is characterized by five solas: sola gratia - salvation comes by grace alone, sola fide - that saving grace comes through faith alone, solus Christus - it comes only by the substitutionary atonement and imputed by the righteousness of Christ, sola Scriptura - our faith is based on the Bible alone, soli Deo gloria - thus salvation brings glory to God alone

adopted strict rules within their churches that prohibited what they defined as “un-Christian behavior” such as drinking, playing cards, and dancing.

Fundamentalists also led the battle against the teaching of evolution in public schools which culminated in the Scopes trial⁴⁶ and discouraged their members from attending secular schools. Consequently, Fundamentalists created their own institutions to provide alternatives to public and private secular institutions. In addition, Fundamentalists have historically avoided anything that resembled the social gospel because they did not want to be confused with or be tempted to become like the liberal Protestant churches.

The separatist position adopted by Fundamentalists makes engagement in the local community and social service provision extremely difficult. Some fundamentalists refuse to associate with people who do not agree with their theological views or do not live in accordance with the church’s rules. These beliefs make it difficult for Fundamentalists to serve people who are not already in agreement with their theological values and to partner with non-fundamentalist organizations, including other Christian churches.

Evangelicals

Even though evangelicals are often confused with Fundamentalists because of their conservative position on controversial issues and because of their strict interpretation of the Bible, Evangelicals are quite different from the Fundamentalists. Evangelicals are Christians who agree with the fundamentalists on the “fundamentals” but disagree with what they consider fundamentalists’ anti-intellectual, separatist, belligerent⁴⁷ approach to countering the modernism in American culture and churches. Evangelicals object to Fundamentalists’:⁴⁸

1. Unwillingness to include social ministry in their activities. Evangelicals believed that Jesus’ ministry was to the whole person, and that the Bible called Christians to share the good news, care for the needs of the disadvantaged, and be more loving and less exclusive than the fundamentalists.
2. Anti-intellectualism. Fundamentalists started bible schools and discouraged their members from attending secular schools, including universities, and pursuing careers in politics. Evangelicals encouraged their members to be engaged in the world, its culture, and its institutions. They believed they were called to be in the world, just not of it, and that they needed to be involved in the “world’s” institutions in order to have an influence on them.
3. Legalism. Evangelicals rejected Fundamentalists extra-biblical lists of do’s and don’ts.
4. Attitude of circling the wagons and unwillingness to work with other Christians with whom they disagree or Christians who associate with people who are “sinful”.

⁴⁶ “Defining Evangelicalism, 25 Mar. 2003

<[http:// www.wheaton.edu/isae/defining_evangelicalism?](http://www.wheaton.edu/isae/defining_evangelicalism?)

⁴⁷ Defining Evangelicalism

⁴⁸ Dr. Gordon Hugenberger, Senior Pastor, Park Street Church, Personal interview, 11 Feb. 2003.

Evangelicals try to cooperate with other churches that share the same values when they can for the social good.

Unlike the fundamentalists, evangelicals are not separatists. They believe in the importance of having Christians engaged and involved in “the world”, in the highest levels of power, in governmental positions, and in the nation’s best colleges and universities regardless of their religious orientation so that they can provide a Christian influence in these circles. They also believe that the example of Jesus Christ mandates that Christians generously help and serve “the least of these” – the poor, the hungry, the lonely, the oppressed, and the prisoner. Their goal is not simply to improve the quality of life of the people around them as an end in itself, but that the world may come to know Christ through their actions, their loving care, and the witness of their lives in faith. After all, they chose to be identified as “evangelicals” for a reason.

However, Evangelicals’ theological views also make partnerships and community engagement more difficult. Although Evangelicals believe that it is important to try to work with other organizations for society’s benefit, they are very careful to select partners who they feel they can trust and whose goals and beliefs do not contradict their own. Because Evangelicals have a very narrow definition of salvation and who God is, the pool of organizations with which partnerships are problematic is larger. While partnerships can be tricky, evangelicals have no qualms about serving those who hold different theological or world views. In fact, they welcome non-believers or people from other faiths into their programs since their commission is to make disciples of all nations. These issues will be explored further in the body of the thesis.

Mainline Protestants

The term “Mainline Protestant,” refers to specific Protestant churches and denominations whose leadership and educational institutions reject one or more of the five fundamentals.⁴⁹ During the evangelical movement, there was a large contingent of scholars and pastors known as liberal evangelicals, moderates, or the evangelical left who had aligned themselves with evangelicals against the Fundamentalists, but they did not agree with all of evangelicals’ views. These churches were called “mainline” churches because their denominations were long-established and the number of churches adhering to these beliefs outnumbered the evangelical and fundamentalist churches. According to a statement issued by mainline Protestant churches regarding the provisions in H.R.7 which was issued on June 28, 2001, American Baptist Churches USA, The Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ (also historically known as the Congregationalists), Presbyterian Church USA, Quakers, and the United

⁴⁹ “Fundamentalism, 25 Mar. 2003

Methodist Church consider themselves to be mainline protestant denominations.⁵⁰ Other mainline Protestant denominations include the Evangelical Lutheran Church.⁵¹ It is important to note while the leadership of mainline denominations is liberal, there are churches that are part of these denominations, particularly those in rural areas which are evangelical⁵².

Mainline Protestant churches' theological beliefs which emphasize the community, ethical living, and mankind while de-emphasizing the individual, doctrine, and God make it easier for them to work in coalitions and accept funding from secular organizations. "These "mainline" Protestant denominations are characterized by a generally progressive theology and an openness both to other churches and, at times, even other religions. They have concerned themselves with not simply their own religious beliefs, but also American society as a whole."⁵³ Jeremy Nowak's study on churches in Philadelphia confirms this assumption. He found that mainline Protestant churches had a tendency, if not a preference, to work in ecumenical coalitions when pursuing community development related activities. These coalitions were varied: some were interfaith relationships, some were inter-denominational, and others were intra-denominational.

Liberal Protestant churches are denominations or churches within mainline denominations that believe that the Bible is a witness of God and not the word of God. The beliefs of liberal Protestants are most closely aligned with the beliefs of the liberals who embraced the rationalism and focus on mankind that defined the Enlightenment period. While the theological beliefs on some issues can vary considerably within this group Liberal Protestants' view of sin, salvation, and Christ are significantly different from Evangelicals' views. These differences make partnerships with secular organizations, government agencies, and other FBOs considerably easier for Liberal Protestant churches. Some liberal Protestants do not believe in the deity of Christ. Many liberal churches believe that salvation can be achieved through doing good works on earth and not harming others, that everyone will go to heaven regardless of their religious beliefs, or that salvation after death is only symbolic or nonexistent. As a result there is no need to evangelize or convert people with whom they interact. While most liberal Protestant churches teach that abortion is morally wrong, many ultimately support a woman's right to choose and many accept homosexuality and gay rights.

<<http://faith.propadeutic.com/names.html>>

⁵⁰ "Mainline Protestant Groups Express Concern with H.R.7, House Faith-Based Bill: Baptist, Episcopalian, United Methodist, Presbyterian, Quaker, and United Church of Christ Leaders, Call on President and Lawmakers to Take Bill Off Fast Track" June 28, 2001

⁵¹ some mainline denominations have the word evangelical in their names

⁵² the historical distinctives refer to the beliefs embraced by the Protestants during the Protestant Reformation which are very similar to the beliefs of evangelical churches

⁵³ "Mainline Protestant, 4 Apr. 2003

Focusing on Evangelical Christian Churches

Given the significant differences in the values and beliefs among Protestant churches alone, organizations seeking to either increase the role of congregations in their community through partnerships or funding must understand how theological differences impact the ways in which congregations make decisions about partnerships, providing services, and engaging in the community. Avis Vidal notes that there is a gap in understanding of different types of congregations that would enable us to understand what factors affect congregational engagement, how congregations make decisions on what urban ministry to pursue, what factors affect their willingness to enter in to partnerships or certain types of ministries.

This thesis will focus on how Evangelical Christian churches' theological beliefs and values influences how and why they make certain decisions as they pursue community development activities. It is particularly interesting to study the perspectives and actions of evangelical churches because they are a growing presence in urban communities and thereby have the potential to significantly impact urban communities, evangelical churches' interest in community involvement is increasing, and evangelical churches' strong theological views can make community engagement and partnerships more problematic.

Who Are the Evangelicals?

"Evangelical" is a word that conjures up many different images and definitions. People on the outside often confuse Christian evangelicals with Fundamentalists because of their conservative positions on the Bible, sin, salvation, homosexuality, and abortion. While Evangelicals and Fundamentalists both fall on the conservative end of the spectrum of Christian FBOs and share many core theological beliefs, they are different. The word evangelical actually comes from the Greek term *euangelion*, which means "gospel" or "good news". Technically, anything pertaining to the gospel⁵⁴ can be described as "evangelical". Although the term once referred to the group of churches that separated from the Catholic Church during the Protestant Reformation, today the term "evangelical" refers to Protestant churches that hold the beliefs held by the Protestants who participated in the evangelical movement in the 1940s.

However, beyond the 4 beliefs and characteristics of Evangelical churches that were described in the introduction there are many differences among Evangelical churches. Evangelical churches are members of a wide variety of denominations or are independent churches. Some of them disagree on

<http://atheism.about.com/library/glossary/western/bldef_mainline.htm>

“secondary issues”⁵⁵ such as when or how people should be baptized or the details of what will happen during Jesus Christ’s second coming. Some evangelical churches are Charismatic or Pentecostal. In addition, the styles of preaching and worship can vary considerably. Consequently, one must remember that their evangelicalism is based on their core beliefs with regards to the identity of Jesus Christ, the significance of Jesus Christ, and the means by which a person is saved.

Although there are many differences among Evangelical churches, there are several evangelical leaders, organizations, and publications that are recognized as representing evangelical interests and beliefs. Leaders like Billy Graham who is mostly known for his crusades has come to symbolize the collaborative attitude of evangelicals. Parachurch organizations such as Campus Crusade for Christ, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, and the Navigators have fellowships in many colleges and university campuses throughout the country that are supported by a wide variety of Evangelical churches. Organizations like Promise Keepers, World Relief, Prison Fellowship Ministries, and Teen Challenge that have recently received a lot of national attention in the media are widely accepted by Evangelical churches as Evangelical ministries. Periodicals such as Christianity Today and Moody Monthly are also major evangelical periodicals.⁵⁶

The Presence of Evangelicals

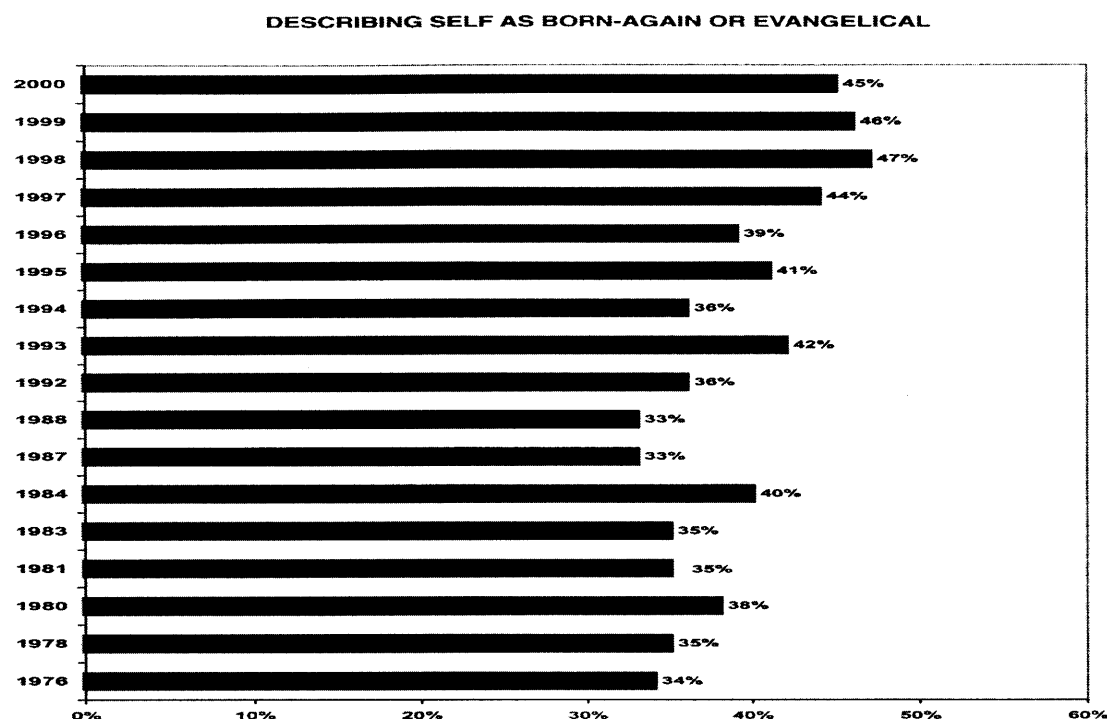
Although it is difficult to quantify the number of Evangelicals and Evangelical churches in the United States, there are some estimates that provide a picture of the presence of evangelical churches throughout the country. It is difficult to establish an exact count of the number of Evangelical churches and Evangelicals in the United States because there is no “gate-keeper” for Evangelicals. The category includes many different Evangelical denominations, thousands of independent churches, churches within mainline Protestant churches, and people within non-Evangelical churches who are Evangelical. A quick look at the members of the National Association of Evangelicals’ testifies to the diversity of the evangelical landscape. According to its website its membership is comprised of 42,500 congregations from 47 member denominations and individual congregations from 26 additional denominations, several hundred other independent churches, 245 parachurch ministries and educational institutions. NAE estimates that it directly and indirectly impacts 27 million people. Estimates of the evangelicals in the United States are usually a count based on the cumulative result of several scientific studies.

⁵⁴ According to Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary, the use of “the gospel” in the New Testament refers to “the ‘good tiding’ of the kingdom of God and of salvation through Christ, to be received by faith on the basis of His expiatory death, His burial resurrections, and ascension.”

⁵⁵ Secondary issues refer to issues that do not related to the means and ground for salvation, the identity of Jesus Christ, the authority of the Bible.

⁵⁶“Neo-Evangelicalism: Characteristics and Positions, 25 Mar. 2003
<<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/neoe.htm>>

One of the studies is performed annually by the Gallup organization asks approximately 1,000 people "Would you describe yourself as a 'born-again' or evangelical Christian?" The historical results from the research are shown in the graph below:



Source: Princeton Religion Research Report 2002

The graph shows that the percentage of evangelicals has fluctuated between 31% and 47% over the past 26 years. However, some feel that this simple definition underestimates the number of evangelicals because there are people who hold the same beliefs as Evangelicals or would fit the definition of "Born Again" but do not use that terminology.⁵⁷ Other studies performed by sociologists and political scientists that used more complex definitional parameters estimated that 25-30% of the U.S. population or between 70 and 80 million people are Evangelicals. However, these studies usually exclude African-American Protestants who comprise approximately 8-9% of the U.S. population are overwhelmingly Evangelical in theology and orientation.⁵⁸ Taking this into consideration, Wheaton College feels that 35% of the U.S. population or approximately 100 million people is a safe estimate of Evangelicals in the U.S.

There is a sense that Evangelical churches are growing in number and influence throughout the country and across the world. The fact that many Pentecostal⁵⁹ and Charismatic churches are considered

⁵⁷ Defining Evangelicalism

⁵⁸ 61% of blacks described themselves as "born-again" in the 2001 Gallup poll

⁵⁹ Pentecostalism was a movement that came into being in the early 1900s in a series of revivals. According to the "Defining Evangelicalism", the "most distinctive about this movement was an exuberant worship style and the

evangelical churches has contributed to this perception. The recently documented growth of Pentecostalism and Charismatic churches overseas has led some analysts to speculate that “within the next decade Pentecostalism may overtake the Roman Catholic Church as the largest Christian presence in Latin America.”⁶⁰ The growth of ethnic churches in urban and poorer communities in cities is also contributing to the sense that Evangelical churches are growing in number. Most of the new ethnic churches in cities are evangelical churches.

Jeremy Nowak of The Delaware Valley Community Reinvestment Fund (DVCRF) and Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation (PHPC) studied the religious presence within community and economic development for 18 months. Nowak took special note and interest in Pentecostal and Evangelical congregations because he felt that they had a lot of potential to have a significant impact on community development if given the proper technical assistance. He found an increased level of involvement in community-based development efforts from “Black and Hispanic Pentecostal churches, from white churches and para-church groups that have more conservative Christian theological orientation. . . and from what might be called non-denominational Christian, faith-based corporations.” Nowak considered the entry of these churches in community development activities important because Pentecostal and Evangelical associations were the fastest growing black and Hispanic congregations in Philadelphia’s poor urban areas at a time when mainline churches were becoming increasingly detached from their local communities. Although his study only included congregations in Philadelphia, Nowak felt that his findings would apply to urban areas throughout the country. As a result, he concluded, “Faith-based and evangelical institutions and individuals have the potential for creating a new wave of religious community support for community-based development.”⁶¹

The influence of Evangelical churches in urban areas has also been growing because some of them are intentionally choosing to locate in cities. Redeemer Church is an Evangelical church based in New York City that has a mission of planting churches⁶² in urban areas. They have planted several churches in each of the following cities: New York City, Boston, and San Francisco. There are several evangelical churches in Boston that have planted additional churches throughout the city such as Ruggles Baptist Church, Christ the King Presbyterian Church, and First Congregational Church in Revere. In addition, there are churches like Congregaciòn Leòn de Judá that have intentionally moved into Boston so that they could have a presence in the City and influence in urban neighborhoods.

experience of glossolalia—speaking in tongues—which was seen as a return to the apostolic experience of the Book of Acts and the biblical Baptism of the Holy Spirit.”

⁶⁰ Defining Evangelicalism

⁶¹ Nowak

⁶² “planting” is a Christian term used to describe the act of opening a new church and helping it get established.

Theological Values that Make Involvement in Community Development Activities Compelling and Problematic

Ironically, the beliefs held by Evangelical churches have the potential to push congregations to become extremely active in community development and to simultaneously limit their activity in urban communities. Theologically, Evangelical congregations have extremely strong motivations for participating in community development activities. While many Christian FBOs cite the biblical teachings of Jesus and their desire to share God's love with the community as strong motivations for getting involved in community development not all of them believe in the inerrancy of scripture and emphasize living in accordance to it as Evangelical Christians do. Evangelical churches take all that is written in the Bible very seriously including the versus in which Jesus exhorts believers to take care of the sick, hungry, lonely, and stranger, as well as the verses that give strong warnings against believers who say they are followers of Christ but ignore the needs of people around them. As stated earlier, the Evangelical movement was founded on the principles of social involvement and the necessity to perform community outreach based on its belief in the inerrancy of the Bible. Consequently, Evangelical Christian churches should have a high commitment to their communities and community development activities.

A benefit of services provided by Evangelical churches is holistic programming. Evangelicals' belief that people need to experience personal salvation and have meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ results in holistic programming that seeks to provide for the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of their clients and individuals in their community. Their services foster personal transformation, which many people believe is critical to helping people with drug additions, at-risk youth, and people who are struggling with unhealthy behaviors.

However, these very characteristics can also limit the work of evangelical churches. Evangelical churches' emphasis on living in accordance to the Bible also restricts their involvement in the community. The Bible teaches that Christians should be in the world but not of it, and evangelicals take that teaching seriously as well. Their commitment to stay true to God's word and avoid compromise make them more selective about who they are willing to hire, with whom they are willing to partner, the kinds of activities they are willing to pursue. Evangelical churches are most likely to restrict staff to people who confess the same faith and refuse to hire practicing homosexuals, not out of hate or feeling of superiority, but out of their commitment to stay true to God's word.

Evangelical churches may also find it more difficult to develop partnerships or gain the trust of some community members for several reasons that are out of their control. According to Barna Research Group, many non-Christian people have a negative view of Evangelicals. "In a nationwide survey

released by the Barna Research Group of Ventura, California among a representative sample of people who do not consider themselves to be Christian, the image of "Evangelicals" rated tenth out of eleven groups evaluated, beating out only prostitutes."⁶³ While people agree that personal transformation is important, not everyone agrees that the government should finance the kind of personal transformation that comes from "sectarian" programs like those provided by evangelical churches. Others dislike Evangelicals "narrow" view of salvation and spirituality or fear that the high value that Evangelicals place on spirituality and evangelism will drive them to coerce or manipulate people into conversion. In addition, many Evangelical churches are "commuter churches" or have many members who live in other communities. As a result, the local community may see the church as "outsiders" and it will fail to gain legitimacy.

Therefore, gaining an understanding about how Evangelical churches work through issues and how they approach responding to the needs in their communities will enable community organizations to figure out what the potential role for Evangelical churches in urban communities could be, what they bring to the table, and what, if any, opportunities for partnerships exist.

⁶³ <<http://www.barna.org/cgi-bin>>

CHAPTER 2

EVANGELICAL CHURCHES' ENGAGEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

Before diving into the case studies, it is important to acquire some background knowledge on what is already known or speculated about the community development practices of evangelical churches. To date, there has been little research that documents or notes the different approaches, advantages, challenges, and levels of activity among different types of FBOs. However, the findings of a few recent research projects do shed some light on evangelical churches' engagement in their communities, some distinctive qualities about the ways in which they implement and design service programs, as well as their experiences with government contracts. Some of the results of these research projects contradicts commonly held notions regarding evangelical congregations' level of activity in their community as well as they ways in which they respond to government regulations. The findings of several research projects are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Ram C. Cnaan's recently published research based on interviews with 250 congregations across the United States found that there is little difference in the level of involvement in social and community services between evangelicals and other Christian congregations. Cnaan tried to determine the religious orientation of congregations by asking them to define themselves religiously as fundamentalist, conservative, moderate, or liberal. Assuming that evangelicals defined themselves as "conservative" Cnaan concluded that :

When it comes to service society, groups with different core theologies basically deal the same with people. I'm sure that in many instances of daily life you would find differences between evangelicals and mainline groups, for instance, but in terms of how they care for the needy or their concern for the needy, there isn't that much difference.⁶⁴

Cnaan's conclusion contradicts the widely accepted notion that mainline and more liberal churches are more active in providing social and community services than conservative congregations. Although Cnaan was surprised by his finding there is other research that also suggests that differences in theological orientation do not impact a congregation's level of activity in communities. Research performed by Christian Smith of Duke University found that volunteerism among mainline Protestants and evangelical groups were similar.

However, the fact that evangelical Christian congregations provide the same level of services to the community and have the same level of volunteerism as other FBOs does not mean that there is no difference between services provided by evangelical congregations as other FBOs. From 2001-2002, Amy Sherman and Dr. John C. Green researched the experiences of 389 FBOs in 15 states across the

United States that entered into government contracts to provide social services. The goal of the study was to determine the feasibility of government/FBO partnerships by trying to answer some of the most controversial questions regarding charitable choice: Will FBOs that accept government funds be forced to compromise their religious character?; Will FBOs protect clients civil liberties?; Can FBOs navigate through charitable choice regulations found some patterns or tendencies among evangelical churches that show a significant difference in the perspectives between Protestant evangelical congregations and other FBOs.

While ecumenical non-profits and Catholic Charities comprised most of the Non-Expressive⁶⁵ sector, almost all of the evangelical Protestant groups were in the-Fully Expressive category. In fact, evangelical Protestant groups comprised two-thirds of all of the organizations in the Fully-Expressive category. The Fully-Expressive category was defined as “faith-based contractors that scored high on both religious expression and organizational distinctiveness”⁶⁶. . Four-fifths of this group described themselves as “invitational”, “relational”, or “integrated”⁶⁷ and their practices matched these descriptions. No one could deny that they are faith-based.”⁶⁸ Only 22% of the government contractors were actually congregations, and evangelicals comprised approximately 2/3 of the congregations. The Fully Expressive groups included almost ½ of the congregations, which outnumbered non-profits 2:1 in the Fully-Expressive category.

It is important to note that while congregations in the historically black Protestant denominations made up a small portion of the total, many of the other congregations including evangelical congregations were predominantly minorities. This finding are consistent with the perception that minority churches in urban areas are overwhelming evangelical, Black, other minority, and mixed congregations. These congregations were concentrated in the Fully-Expressive category.

⁶⁴ Ram C. Cnaan, Author of the book The Invisible Caring Hand, Interview by Agnieszka Tennant of Christianity Today, 11 Feb. 2003.

⁶⁵ The “Non-Expressive” groups was defined as faith-based contractors that scored low on both religious expression and organizational distinctiveness. According to the report, “nine of ten of these organizations described their faith-commitment as “not relevant” or as “passive” . . . many of these organizations might not be easily recognized as faith-based in terms of their activities.” The Non-Expressives comprised over ¼ of the sample and were two times more common among nonprofits as they were among congregations.

⁶⁶ Organizational distinctiveness was defined as the ability of organizations to maintain their distinctive faith commitments while receiving government contracts and was measured by the faith-commitments of the organizations’ governing board, the faith-commitments of staff and volunteers, whether the organizations consider the faith-commitments when hiring staff. (pg 21)

⁶⁷ Invitational was defined as “our faith commitments are explicitly mentioned to our clients and they are invited to inquire more fully about religious or spiritual matters outside the program.” Relational was defined as “Our faith commitments are explicitly mentioned to our clients and our staff seeks to establish personal relationships that involve religious or spiritual matters outside the program. Integrated was defined as “Our faith commitments are an explicit and critical part of our work with clients, but our staff respect the right of clients to not participate in the religious or spiritual aspects of the program.” (p.17)

⁶⁸ Green and Sherman, 24

Evangelical FBOs were the most concerned about their ability to control their hiring practices and their ability to maintain a religious environment. Eighty-eight percent of the fully-expressive FBOs, 73% of new participants, and 73% of congregations said that charitable choice's hiring protections were very or somewhat important. While many of the other FBOs had a high percentage of staff who shared the same faith-beliefs it was not a result of the organizations' hiring practices. Instead, the study found that it was a result of self-selection and that people of faith tended to choose to work for organizations that represented their faiths and people who were not religious chose not to work for faith-based organizations.

Additional Attitudes Regarding Charitable Choice

	Expressive (%)*	Non-Expressive (%)
Prohibiting the use of public funds for inherently religious activities		
Very important	47	59
Somewhat important	33	24
Not very important	11	10
Not at all important	10	13
Requiring the government to provide non-faith-based alternatives to clients		
Very important	54	58
Somewhat important	25	27
Not very important	19	9
Not at all important	2	7
Allowing faith-based groups to maintain a religious environment		
Very important	71	25
Somewhat important	18	34
Not very important	9	23
Not at all important	2	19
Allowing faith-based groups to hire staff based on their faith commitments		
Very important	67	18
Somewhat important	21	27
Not very important	8	26
Not at all important	3	29

Sources: 2002 Hudson Institute/Bliss Institute Fifteen-State Survey of Faith Based Contractors (N=389)

There was a surprising amount of participation by evangelical organizations in government contracts. Forty-two percent of the contactors identified themselves as Evangelicals: 1/6 of non-profits were directly connected with an evangelical Protestant denomination (Southern Baptist Convention or Assemblies of God); almost same number were nondenominational orgs that were clearly part of evangelical Protestant tradition; and 1/10 was part of Salvation Army. Evangelical organizations tended to be congregations, with a high level of religious content in their programs. Another surprising finding was that the Fully-Expressives seemed to be most satisfied with their experience with the government. The Fully Expressive offered a more positive assessment than the Non-Expressive and contrary to what might have been expected, the Fully Expressive organizations found officials modestly less intrusive than did the Non-Expressive. The fact that Non-Expressive groups reported more contract detail than the Fully Expressive may have contributed to Fully-Expressive's feeling that the government was less intrusive.

According to Dr. Green, the surprising level of participation and satisfaction among evangelical churches may be a function of their location and corresponding relationship with the government. Many of the evangelical churches were personally approached by governmental agencies asking them to be one of their contracting agencies. Dr. Green felt that these many of these churches would most likely not have applied for government contracts had the government not personally extended the invitation and made efforts to include them in the process. He also felt that the governments in some parts of the United States, such as some cities in the South, are very open to Christianity, Protestants and the preaching of the Gospel and may be more lenient than on the level of proselytization or level of religious content than more liberal cities. Dr. Green felt that, "What is considered a highly religious activity varies from place to place." In addition, although evangelicals made up a large percentage of the participants of Sherman and Green's study, Dr. Green was quick to point out that the number of congregations that actually participated in government contracts were a very small percentage of the evangelical churches and organizations in the United States.

Evangelicals, as represented by the Fully-Expressives relied least on government fund for the continuation of their programs. Sherman and Green's findings are not only consistent with the perception that evangelicals are distrustful of government funding, but it shows they are so concerned that government funding will cause them to compromise their religious values that many of them entered into these government contracts with alternative plans in place. Three-quarters of the respondents indicated that they had plans to pursue other non-governmental funds to continue the service "if government or legal requirements . . . began threatening the religious character of their organization. Nonprofits were more likely to report such plans compared to congregations. . . large organizations, those with extensive client interaction and broad antipoverty engagement, and Fully Expressive FBOs were more likely than

their counterparts to report having specific plans for locating non-government funding for their programs. Seventy-percent of Fully-Expressives as opposed to 43% of non-expressive had alternative plans. In addition, the government funds were a very small percentage of the total program funds for programs sponsored by evangelical organizations. The government funds usually were used to help the organizations serve additional clients, not start up a new program.

Strategies for Complying with Charitable Choice Guidelines

	Expressive	Non-expressive
Segregate public funds from other funds	80%	57%
Provide special training for staff/volunteers	65%	47%
Hold inherently religious activities at special times	70%	33%
Hold inherently religious activities at special locations	44%	32%
Keep detailed records of public funding of staff	46%	25%

Sources: 2002 Hudson Institute/Bliss Institute Fifteen-State Survey of Faith Based Contractors (N=389)

Contrary to the fears of people opposed to governmental support of “sectarian” faith-based organizations Fully Expressive FBOs went to the greatest lengths to ensure their compliance with Charitable Choice legislation. They were the most likely to employ multiple strategies for ensuring compliance with the charitable choice guidelines. Fully Expressive FBOs utilized the “separate location” strategy and special record-keeping strategies. Expressives were significantly more likely to report knowledge and use of charitable choice guidelines than other groups in the study. Many of the Fully-Expressives intentionally trained their staff in Charitable Choice regulations to ensure that their staff did not violate the regulations. As a result, seventy percent of the Expressives versus 40% of the non-Expressives are familiar with Charitable Choice guidelines. Fully-Expressives strongly agreed with the requirement that FBOs inform their potential clients of their rights, particularly their right to select another service provider. The fact that the Expressive groups lost 20% of their clients who chose more secular alternatives as opposed to only 1% for Non-Expressives demonstrates that they were informing clients of their rights. Consequently, Sherman and Green concluded that “These respondents are the ones that critics of charitable choice are most concerned about. Based on our findings, though, it is these very groups that demonstrate intentional and extensive efforts to comply with charitable choice’s restrictions on underwriting inherently religious activities with government dollars.”⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Green and Sherman p38.

Protecting The Civil Rights of Clients

	Expressive (%)	Non-Expressive (%)
Reassure clients that services do not depend on religion	76	61
Clarify that religious activities are optional	75	53
Notify clients of right to alternative	79	64

Source: 2002 Hudson Institute/Bliss Institute Fifteen-State Survey of Faith Based Contractors (N=389)

While Dr. John C. Green confirmed that evangelical churches are becoming increasingly interested and active in their communities, there are some historical and theological reasons for the seeming inaction and lack of involvement of evangelical churches in urban communities. Dr. Green, Director of the Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron, and has been surveying evangelical leaders and evangelical communities across the country to learn about evangelicals' attitudes toward civic activism and identify patterns of civic activity for the Evangelicals in Civic Life project. Based on his research, he believes that evangelical churches have historically been removed from civic and political engagement for three main reasons – separatism, intense individualism, and a negative view of politics.

Separatism is the idea that Christians need to separate themselves from the world. Over time, the evangelical church has overcome the pure separatist view and separatism exists simultaneously with civic engagement. They believe that they should be active in the world but not be compromised by it. As a result, evangelicals hold the view that they are a people set apart, but they are set apart to help the community. Christian rock or rap music are other examples of ways that evangelical Christian groups have adapted popular culture or “things of this world” to achieve Christian ends.

Intense individualism comes from evangelicals' focus on individual salvation and individual moral conduct. This intense focus on the individual results in a tendency to see problems as problems of the individual and they have a hard time grasping or choose not to focus on institutional problems. As a result they may not initially create a program but seek to work with the individual to help him or her work through his or her issues. Dr. Green has found that evangelicals have adapted their perspective over time. While they are still individualistic more evangelicals have come to see people as individuals embedded in communities, and have moved to develop formalized programs to help people in need.

Finally, Evangelicals' negative view of politics has also kept them from directly engaging in politics as an institution. They have historically seen politics as something dirty – something that requires wheeling and dealing. There was and still is a sense that getting involved with politics will force

the church to make alliances with people or organizations with whom they disagree on critical values and that the church should spend its limited time and resources on something more pure like evangelism. Again, evangelicals have adapted their position a little because they recognize that politics is a necessary evil. While they may not be hostile to political involvement they do feel like political involvement is for them. Consequently, one rarely sees evangelicals leading the charge in the public arena to advocate or protest a particular issue. However, they have reluctantly participated in political advocacy or protest when they are for social justice issues to help people for whom they care deeply and are “pulled into” political action. The only issues that evangelical churches have been vocal about in the political arena are gay rights, abortion, and issues in which they feel the government has overstepped their bounds with regards to the church.

Evangelicals reluctance to get involved with politics is related to their skepticism and distrust of partnering with the government. They do not want to be put in a position where they have to be accountable to or have to abide by the rules of the government when they believe that God is calling them to do something else. Dr. Green has found that the issue of gay rights and rules against proselytization have made evangelicals particularly skeptical about partnering with the government. Dr. Green recalled that one evangelical leader said, “Yeah. We’re not supposed to proselytize, but we’re in the proselytizing business.” There are times when evangelical churches have had positive relationships with government agencies; however, the relationship was always with local government agencies. It seems that evangelical churches see the federal government or legislative bodies differently from local government. Many of them do not think of agencies like the local welfare department as “the government”.

Not only have evangelical churches’ consciously held themselves back from civic and political engagement, but there are some practical reasons why it has been more difficult for evangelicals to have a larger voice in communities. Unlike the mainline Protestant denomination, the Catholic church, or several other major religions, there is no central place or point-person to approach if someone in the political arena or larger community wanted to partner or get the opinion of evangelical churches. The sectarian spirit and narrow set of goals of evangelical churches have kept most evangelicals away from broader coalitions of churches where they might exert some influence or voice their opinions to a broader community.

Despite the many reasons that have kept evangelicals from being more civically engaged, Dr. Green feels that evangelical churches possess many positive characteristics as a result of their theological perspectives that could make them a tremendous force in American communities. Evangelicals’ pressing desire and zeal to evangelize provides a source of enormous energy and resources which they are being devoting to find broader and new ways in which to reach people in their community. “In a place where there are many religions, evangelicals stand out as people who want to stand out. They know who they

are what they want to do, and that gives them an advantage.” Dr. Green also sees their unwillingness to accommodate to the secular world and culture and ability to adapt to new things as another source of incredible potential. “They take their theology so seriously that they will argue about it [civic engagement]. They really care.” As a result, he feels their self-consciousness means that when they do engage in the community it is something that has been carefully thought through, argued over, and are wholeheartedly behind.

Ronald Theimann, professor at Harvard University, believes that Evangelical Christian organizations tend to be independent and resistant to bureaucracy. He asserts that Evangelical Christians have a tendency to form free-standing social service organizations because of the trans-denominational nature of the Evangelical movement. He has found that many Evangelical Christian churches are independent organizations, without any ties to national denominational agencies, and tend to have a doctrine of the church that is strongly congregational in character. Consequently, he is unsure whether Evangelical churches would pursue or accept governmental funding because Evangelical churches resist large, bureaucratized organizations for theological reasons.⁷⁰

In conclusion, while research shows that the evangelical churches’ theological views do not result in a significantly different level of service provision to their communities or volunteerism from more liberal, mainline Protestant churches as previously thought, there is a difference in the ways in which evangelical churches provide the services and their position on several programming issues. Evangelical churches appear to tend to restrict staff to people who share the same values, their programs fall on the higher end of the range of religious content in the programming. In addition, the behavior of evangelical churches as documented in the Sherman and Green study indicate that people’s fears about “sectarian” FBOs do not apply to Evangelical Christian congregations. Evangelical churches were the most careful about keeping government funds separated from other sources of funds, their staff were most knowledgeable and well trained about the government regulations, and they valued the importance of giving beneficiaries a choice of non-religious service more than other types of FBOs. Research also shows that Evangelical churches may have lower levels of political activism because of their distrust of government and political influence due to a lack of organization among local evangelical groups as well as their aversion to bureaucratic organizations than different types of FBOs.

These findings will be tested in the following case studies which look closely at how evangelical churches make decisions about hiring, the services they offer, their political activism, the religious content in their programming, partnerships, place, as well as the reasoning behind these decisions.

⁷⁰ Theimann, p. 58.

CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDIES: INTRODUCTION

This chapter looks closely at the organizational decisions and perspectives of Congregaciòn Leòn de Judá (CLJ) , First Congregational Church in Revere (FCC), and Park Street Church (PSC) -- three evangelical churches in the Boston area—as they attempt to meet the needs of residents in their urban communities. The goal of these case studies is to provide a deeper understanding of how Evangelical Christian congregations think about each of these issues, what theological beliefs or values shaping their decisions, and they decide on activities the churches will pursue.

Although the case studies are not entirely made up of quotes, the case studies present the churches' perspective on each of the issues listed below and the church's interpretation of events, decisions, and theological framework. A comparison across the case studies and an analysis of the information provided by CLJ, FCC, and PSC are contained the chapter following the case studies.

The information in all three case studies is organized into the same categories to facilitate comparison. Each case study opens with a quote provided by a pastor from each church that he felt best captured the church's perspective and theological framework for the work it was doing in the community. The historical background of each church and events leading up to the launching of programs or services designed to meet the needs of their respective communities are provided at the beginning of each case study. The case studies are then broken into sections which provide each churches' perspective on and approach to programming, partnerships, personnel, place, people, and politics.

The case studies show that the actions and decisions of these churches and how they view and go about trying to address the needs of people in their communities cannot be understood without understanding the theological beliefs and values they hold. In all three cases, the church leadership is guided by the principles of relying on God and the power of the Holy Spirit, the will to maintain identity as a church, commitment to stay true to God's word and His commands, the Christian call to be a loving witness, and the hope that people in the community would come to know Jesus Christ as their personal savior. Although the three churches have sought to meet the needs in their respective communities in different ways, there are several biblical principles and theological beliefs that cut across all of the case studies and significantly impact the ways in which these churches make decisions about programming, partnerships, personnel, defining their communities, and involvement in politics. These principles and beliefs are explained below to provide some familiarity with a few underlying theological beliefs held by these churches that significantly influence their decisions.

The Definition of a “Christian”

All three churches uphold the Evangelical definition of a Christian, which is a person who recognizes that he is as a sinner and has accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. A Christian believes that he is saved only by grace, which is granted to people who have faith in Jesus Christ. Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God provided by God as an atonement for man’s sins, and that there is no other way to salvation except believing in Jesus. Although different evangelical churches including the ones in this case study, might hold different views on issues such as the correct method of baptism or what exactly will happen in Jesus’ second coming, they all share the same core beliefs which were listed in the literature review.

All three churches also agree that a Christian would believe in the importance of the role of the Holy Sprit, which is part of the Holy Trinity. A Christian would believe that the Holy Spirit teaches and guides them, gives power and spiritual gifts to Christians according to God’s will, and enables them to live as Jesus has called them to live in accordance with the teachings in the Bible. Because this is what PSC, CLJ, and FCC believe is a Christian and the values that a Christian holds, the use of the word “Christian “ in the case studies refer to the above definition.

Evangelism, Being a Witness, and Serving People in the Community

For all three churches being a witness for Christ, evangelism, and meeting the needs of the people in the community are closely linked. The goals of being a witness and evangelism do not allow these churches to just provide services to the community. In their minds, the services they provide, regardless of the actual religious content in the service itself, cannot be separated from being a witness for Christ or evangelism. The services are an integral part of the churches efforts to share the gospel with people in the community. Being a witness for Christ means that a Christian is “testifying” to the truth that Jesus Christ is who he claimed to be by living out one’s faith in accordance with Jesus’ teaching. Living out one’s faith is supposed to naturally result in service to others, compassion and care for the disadvantaged and forgotten, and a desire to share the truth about salvation and Jesus Christ with others. In Matthew 25: 35, 36, 40 Jesus teaches his disciples that the mark of someone who knows and loves Jesus is compassionate and sacrificial care for others:

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and you came to visit me... I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.⁷¹

⁷¹ NIV Matthew 25:35,36,40

The idea is that when a person is helping other people he is being a witness for Christ. People will see his actions and attitude and become interested in Jesus and perhaps become a Christian. A passage in Isaiah highlights how evangelism, being a witness, and serving others work together:

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.
New International Version Isaiah 58: 6-9

This concept of being a witness leads PSC, CLJ, and FCC to prefer relational and social evangelism. Relational evangelism is a form of evangelism that is based on personal relationships between Christians and non-Christians. As non-Christians interact with Christians and get to see what it means to be a Christian and experience first-hand the love of God through Christians, these churches believe that people's reaction will be curiosity about Jesus Christ. When the non-Christian is ready or "open", the Christian shares the gospel. PSC, CLJ, and FCC also prefer relational evangelism because they feel that the words of and convictions of someone with whom one has a personal and trusting relationship will have a much stronger impact than the words of a stranger. Social evangelism is similar to relational evangelism except that the relationship is formed based on acts of service designed to meet people's needs. Social evangelism and relational evangelism are often provided together. The churches select staff or volunteers who are gifted or trained in relational evangelism to provide people in the community services that meet their needs.

Although many people feel uncomfortable with having sectarian FBOs like evangelical churches provide services to the community because they think evangelicals will pressure or manipulate beneficiaries into conversion or deny services to people of different faiths, the fact is that evangelicals believe that such behavior is absolutely wrong. Not only do they believe that it is against their integrity, but believe that social and relational evangelism are not only modeled after Jesus' ministry but that they are more effective and in accordance with the instructions of the Bible. The Bible instructs Christians that when people ask them why they are different or why they have provided the acts of service they responses are to be gentle and respectful:

¹⁵But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.⁷²

⁷² NIV 1 Peter 3: 13-16

In addition, evangelicals have no interest in forcing someone into conversion because they believe that true conversion is something between God and the individual, according to God's timing. It is not something that can be forced onto someone because conversion requires that someone truly believe it in his heart, which never results from manipulation or coercion. Romans 10:9-10 “⁹That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. 1 Corinthians 3:3b” This is why FCC, PSC and CLJ do not have any problems agreeing not to “proselytize” when proselytization is defined as shoving the Bible down people's throats and trying to coerce people into becoming Christians.

Integrity

As Christ's witnesses to the City of Boston, CLJ, PSC and FCC are careful to make sure that they do everything with integrity as commanded in the Bible. 2 Corinthians 6:3-4, 6-7a instructs Christians to “. . . put no stumbling block in any one's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way. . . in purity, understanding, patience, and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God.” Whether the church is interacting with their beneficiaries, funders, or partnering with other organizations, CLJ is intentionally upfront about their beliefs and the fact that the program is being sponsored by a church. They will let funders know that they will share the gospel with their beneficiaries if the opportunity arises because they do not want anyone to feel like they have been manipulated or tricked. In addition, they let all their clients or beneficiaries know that the programs are being provided by a church and inform them of any religious activity that is included in the programming so that no one will be manipulated.

Reliance on God

In all three cases, the churches try to rely on God for leadership regarding everything they do. This attitude carries over to the way they make decisions about the kinds of services the church provides. In Psalm 127:1-2, God tells his people that the work they do is in vain unless He is behind it. “Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain.”² This is why prayer and waiting for a calling or burden from God are such important precursors to all of the programs that the churches pursue. They believe that God is working and has a vision and purpose of each of them and that churches' and Christians' “job” is to identify what God is calling them to and then act on it. As a result, when these churches decide to start a program or service they do not see it as their projects or their programs, they consider it God's work. Because they

believe that the services they decide to pursue are God's will they also believe that God will provide for all that is necessary to carry out those services.

Do Not Be Yoked with Unbelievers

PSC, CLJ, and FCC are careful about who they partner with because of the Bible's clear teaching that they should not be joined with people whose values, actions, and decisions will either lead them away from God's will or prevent them from being obedient and pursuing God's will. 2 Corinthians 6:14-17 instructs, "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? . . . what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols?"

The image is one of two cows that are under bonded together by a yoke that prevents one cow from going in a different direction from the other. Since Christians and non-Christians strongly disagree on God, who Jesus is, and the value of the Bible it is inevitable that there will be times when they disagree. As a result, the churches in the case studies are careful about entering into partnerships because they do not want to be "yoked" or forced to lose control of its the decision-making power over the direction of the church or the services they believe they been called by God to perform.

Discipleship

The word "disciple" or "mathetes" in Greek literally means a learner; however, the definition of the word implies action based on what one has learned. According to Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary, "a disciple was not only a pupil, but an adherent; hence they are spoken of as imitators of their teacher."⁷³ In the case of Christians, the teacher is Jesus Christ. CLJ, FCC, and PSC consider "discipleship" which focuses on teaching its congregants to be imitators of Christ, helping them understand the meaning of what the Bible says, and encouraging them to apply what they learn to their lives so that each person in their congregation can grow to become a Christian whose character and life imitates the life of Christ one of the main purposes. Although "discipleship" usually refers to working with people who are already believers, discipleship is also sometimes used as a form of evangelism. The idea is that people may decide to become Christians as they learn more about Jesus Christ, what the Bible says, and interact with the person who is "discipling" them.

⁷³W.E.Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White, Jr., Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc. 1996) 171.

CASE STUDY: CONGREGACIÒN LEÒN DE JUDÁ

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

– *NIV 2 Chronicles 7:14*

History

Congregaciòn Leòn de Judá (CLJ) is a church that has undergone a considerable amount of change since it was founded in 1982. Its openness to change in response to God’s calling has contributed to the congregation’s growth, vitality, and ability to respond to the needs of its urban community. CLJ’s story is the story of a congregation that has passionately sought after reconciliation and a right relationship with God and has, in the process, been led to sacrificially provide social ministry to the Boston community.

During its 21 years in existence, Congregaciòn Leòn de Judá has changed both its location and name three times. When it was founded by Juan and Elsi Vergara who came from Puerto Rico in 1982, the church was located in Emmanuel Gospel Center and was named Iglesia Bautista Central because of its location in the City of Boston (South End). Although the church started with only 15 members, it quickly outgrew its space at the Emmanuel Gospel Center and moved to a church building located on the corner of Putnam Avenue and Magazine Street in Central Square that was donated to the Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society who then offered to co-own the building with Iglesia Bautista Central. When Iglesia Bautista Central moved to Cambridge, it changed its name to Iglesia Bautista Central de Cambridge (Central Immanuel Baptist Church of Cambridge). In 1997 under the leadership of Rev. Roberto Miranda, Iglesia Bautista Central de Cambridge returned to Boston in response to a calling from God to bring healing to the City of Boston and changed its name to Congregaciòn Leòn de Judá.

Because CLJ is a Latino church, it is important to also understand the history of evangelical churches in Latin America, which could influence the way CLJ responds to the community, opportunities for partnerships and the government. In Latin America, Pentecostals and Evangelicals avoided getting involved in politics because the Catholic Church had partnered with the government, forming a complex power structure that they did not like. The influence of fundamentalist missionaries who went to Latin America in the 1980s who wanted Christians to have a voice in society and joined the left wing movement added to evangelicals’ dislike for civic engagement. The left wing/fundamentalist approach was a mix of Liberation Theology, Marxism, and the social gospel with guns. As a result, evangelicals chose the lesser of the two evils and sided with the right wing movement and avoided anything that

smacked of the Liberation Theology that the Fundamentalists were promoting and the social gospel through the 1980's because they did not want to be associated with or make the same mistakes as the Fundamentalists or Liberal churches.

The history of evangelical churches in Latin-America has had a strong impact on the perspective of Latino churches in the United States and has limited their involvement in the community and civic engagement. However, evangelicals in Latin-America are recently beginning to get involved in activities that promote social equity and evangelical Latino churches in Boston are slowly becoming more open to the idea of getting involved in social service provision. CLJ is informally serving as a pilot project for other evangelical Latino churches in the Boston area who are closely watching CLJ to see whether they will be able to provide services to the community and its retain its theological integrity.

Under Rev. Miranda's leadership CLJ broke away from the traditions of the Latino church and underwent many changes that eventually led to its active involvement in the community. According to Samuel Acevedo, a long-time member of CLJ, Director of the church's Higher Education Resource Center (HERC), and now one of CLJ's pastors, CLJ has been experiencing continual renewal for the past 12 years. The church defines renewal as the structural transformation in a church and its surrounding societies that is led by the Holy Spirit." This renewal occurs when a church repents and humbles itself before God as described in 2 Chronicles 7:14 says, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." In retrospect, Samuel feels that the renewal process occurred in 5 steps. The first four steps which involved the transformation to a charismatic style of worship, street-level evangelism, relocation to the South End, and the introduction of cell groups seem to have prepared the congregation for the final step which was a call to heal the land.

The first two steps of renewal prepared the hearts of the people in the congregation for social ministry. In 1990, Pastor Miranda and the church believed that they needed to be a church that was filled with and led by the Holy Spirit. Towards that end the church changed its style of worship from a conservative Baptist style of worship, which is usually very reserved, to a charismatic style of worship. In 1991, the church then took steps to become what Samuel calls a "warmer church" that stepped outside its church walls by engaging in street level evangelism. The church members handed out tracts to people passing by on the streets. Although it initially felt "weird" to many people, it helped to begin orienting the thoughts of church members to people outside the church. In 1992, the church quickly took its next step towards renewal when it felt that the Lord called the church to move out of Cambridge back into the City of Boston to be "in front of the liquor stores and bars."

In 1992, Rev. Miranda received a vision for the church in a dream, which he and the church leaders interpreted as a call to fight for the city of Boston under God's authority. The church agreed that

it was being called to move the church to the City of Boston to play a significant role in evangelizing and bringing healing to the City. CLJ believes that it “received a calling from God to go beyond the traditional religion to help address the other needs of our community, and relocated from Cambridge to Lower Roxbury to more effectively and better serve Greater Boston’s Hispanic community.”⁷⁴ The church looked for a location in or near the heart of the city and found one near the center of Boston and the Hispanic community. The church is located near the border of the South End and Roxbury at 68 Northampton Street right off of Massachusetts Ave, near Boston Medical Center. In 1997, after five years of renovation, Iglesia Bautista Central de Cambridge changed its name to Congregación Leòn de Judá (CLJ), and moved into the new building “To help establish the lordship of Jesus Christ in the city of Boston by means of worshipping God, equipping believers and evangelizing to the lost.”

CLJ then focused on equipping believers by establishing cell groups ministries, which caused CLJ’s congregation grow in numbers and diversity. Cell groups are neighborhood based Bible studies designed to introduce people to Christianity and to help them grow in their faith. They are held in people’s homes instead of at the church so that people who do not normally attend church will feel more comfortable. The cell groups drew people who Samuel described as “more urban”: it drew people of different economic status, occupations, educational accomplishments, and life experiences. Today the church has a very heterogeneous congregation that includes people who can provide a wealth of professional services and are keenly aware of the social service needs in the community such as doctors, teachers, social workers. The congregation also consists of people who are in great need of help including immigrants, the very poor, and uneducated. The combination of these skills, perspectives, and needs have been extremely helpful to the church as it began to provide programs for the community.

Armed with a congregation that was filled with the Holy Spirit and had a firm foundation in the beliefs of the church, a community-oriented perspective, and a diversity of talents, CLJ entered into the fifth stage of spiritual renewal: healing the land, which according to Samuel involves reversing the “injurious works that Satan has perpetuated on the community in the name of Jesus.” CLJ believes that this healing comes from social evangelism that is modeled on the ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus’ ministry focused on healing the brokenness in people that was a result of sin and the lies of this world. CLJ believes that it is called to represent the interests of Jesus Christ in Boston by administering programs that will help heal the broken such as programs that address educational, emotional, family counseling, and drug rehabilitation needs. CLJ’s believes that addressing these needs furthers the mission of the church. In its application to the Nellie Mae Foundation, CLJ wrote, “To fulfill our mission, the church must address the void in the lives of our children and families, and provide services that address their needs.”

⁷⁴ Excerpt from CLJ’s proposal to the Nellie Mae Foundation for the Boston Higher Education Resource Center

Programs

CLJ's first effort to address the needs of the Hispanic community in Boston was the Higher Education Resource Center (HERC). HERC is an outgrowth of conversations between the Emmanuel Gospel Center, the Nellie Mae Foundation, and Higher Education Information Center who were trying to develop a program that would help Latino students in Boston improve their academic performance and obtain higher levels of educational attainment. This group of organizations, led by the Nellie Mae Foundation, invited FBOs in the Boston area to a meeting to ascertain whether any of them would be interested in operating a higher education resource center. After several conversations, CLJ and several other organizations were asked to submit a proposal to Nellie Mae to operate the center. In July 1999, CLJ was selected to run a HERC because Nellie Mae, the Higher Education Information Center and Emmanuel Gospel felt that it was the best fit.

These organizations were looking for a place that could eventually help the entire family, an organization that was already imbedded in a community, and organizations that had credibility within the Latino community, and had a wealth of resources including a building, hyper-motivated personnel, large pool of volunteers that would benefit the program. CLJ decided to submit a proposal because it believed that a program like HERC would enable CLJ to implement a mercy ministry in the community that they were uniquely positioned to provide and because CLJ believed that HERC was an answer to prayer.

Before it was approached by the Nellie Mae Foundation, CLJ had also been praying for God to show it how God wanted the church to serve the community. CLJ had already started a Christian music and art program for youth and a men's support group for the community, but it was looking to provide something more significant to the community. The church had a vision for wanting to do something for Latino youth that could eventually expand to serve the whole family, but it did not have any specific ideas or plans. Instead, of just moving forward with any program, CLJ decided to take time to get to know the community, familiarize itself with the issues and needs, and wait for God to lead the church to a more concrete service.

When the Nellie Mae Foundation approached CLJ with the idea of a HERC, CLJ pursued the program because it fit CLJ's vision and mission. CLJ believes that providing these services in a church and intentionally having Christians provide these services will naturally result in people becoming curious about Christ and becoming Christians because they are receiving the love of Christ through the people and these services. As a result, Samuel considers the walls that enclose HERC higher ground: it is a place of ministry.

CLJ also has a particular interest in helping Latino's successfully complete college at high quality schools because they consider the fact that 70% of Latino students fail out of college is a serious spiritual problem: "We want Christian professionals. If our kids don't graduate, then the Kingdom of God has a problem. We want them to graduate and have Christians penetrate conspicuous institutions of power to infuse the Kingdom of God through these institutions." CLJ's leaders believe that it is important for Christians to be in positions of power and influence so that Christians could positively impact their communities and people's lives in the name of Christ.

Finally, they believe that HERC promotes kingdom building. "HERC is a laboratory of kingdom building – its' not just a Lion of Judah thing between service providers and it beneficiaries." HERC is supported by the efforts of Christians throughout the Boston community: it is partially funded by the Black Ministerial Alliance, and coalition of several African-American churches; and staff and volunteers come from a variety of evangelical churches in Boston including Park Street Church, El Shaddai, Cambridge Community Christian Fellowship, and five different Intervarsity Fellowships from various college and university campuses in the Boston area. In addition, HERC is a kingdom building activity because it enables them to reach kids come from all over the city, 60% of whom are unchurched.

Today, HERC provides a wide variety of services to youth and families in the community. Boston residents can access the HERC's education library which is open from 2:00-7:00 p.m. on weekdays and from 10:00-12:00 on Saturdays. During that time, people are able to use the computers in the facility, access the internet, and receive assistance from HERC staff or its volunteers on a drop-in and appointment basis. Youth can participate in a one-on-one mentoring program that matches college students or adults with individual students for weekly tutoring and other activities designed to encourage college planning and or enrollment. Youth can also take MCAS and SAT preparation courses, receive one-on-one college counseling, attend financial aid application workshops, and participate in arranged tours of college campuses. HERC now serves 450 youth a year and expects to serve up to 550 in the coming year.

CLJ plans to expand its existing programs and add new services such as a day care facility in the building adjacent to the church which it purchased in 1999. When CLJ first moved to 68 Northhampton, the church was committed to fulfilling its call to use its resources to bring healing, spiritual transformation, and the kingdom of God to Boston by serving the needs of its community. Despite the fact the church had no need for the building in its immediate future, CLJ took another concrete step towards its vision to perform, "spiritual work that goes beyond the walls of the church and extends into the community"⁷⁵ and purchased 863 Harrison Ave when it came on the market in 1999. Today, CLJ has

⁷⁵ Summary of Intended Use of Space at 863 Harrison Avenue provided by CLJ

outgrown its space at 68 Northhampton Street, especially if one considers the programs that are on hold until 863 Harrison Avenue is completed.

The new building will serve as CLJ's headquarters for its community-oriented activities which will include: HERC's programs; CLJ's Christian Center for the Arts, which provides musical instruction; a day care center targeting low to moderate income families on the first floor; one floor dedicated to programs designed to help adults struggling with drug and alcohol addiction, homelessness and counseling programs. The new building will enable the Christian Center for the Arts to expand their programs to include dance, drama, and the plastic arts. The basement will have a state-of-the-art recording studio. CLJ contributes its ability to expand into the new building to God's provision and the foresight He gave Rev. Miranda to recognize God's leading.

Partnerships

While CLJ is open to partnering with secular organizations, it examines each situation and determines whether there are shared values and no conflicting ones before it makes a commitment. However, CLJ has been able to form partnerships with non-Christian organizations that gave CLJ enough autonomy over its programs that CLJ did not feel that its evangelic goals and Christian values were going to be compromised.

Partnering with the Nellie Mae Foundation and the Higher Education Information Center to run HERC was not a problem for CLJ because neither organization limited CLJ's ability to pursue its goal of meeting the spiritual needs of the youth as well as their educational needs. CLJ's application to the Nellie Mae Foundation explicitly explains CLJ's evangelistic goals and motivation for providing a service like HERC to the community. Nellie Mae's decision to select CLJ indicates its comfort with CLJ's religious motivations and goals. Because CLJ's style of evangelism is relational evangelism and it believes discriminating against the people it helps is wrong, CLJ had no problems agreeing not to proselytize⁷⁶ or provide service to youth regardless of their religious orientation. Another critical component that enabled CLJ agree to the partnership was that CLJ retained full control of the hiring requirements and process for HERC staff and volunteers.

CLJ's pastors also sit on the boards of several organizations or are members of committees with which CLJ feels there is an affinity. Samuel is the Vice-President of the Board of Directors of Nuestra Comunidad, a community development corporation that serves a Latino community in Boston. Rev. Miranda is a member of the United Way's subcommittee called Faith-In-Action, which awards funding

specifically to faith-based organizations that have visible religious content in their programming. However, CLJ's relationship with these organizations are somewhat one-way relationships which allow CLJ to form a level of partnership with which the church is comfortable. While CLJ's representation on these organizations enable it to influence what these organizations do, these organizations do not have any formal influence over CLJ and the programs it runs in the community.

Personnel

Even though the description of CLJ's programs make it sound like a community center or social service agency, CLJ distinguishes its services through its staff. It is very important to CLJ that it not follow in the footsteps of FBOs like the YMCA: an organization that serves many community needs but is no longer associated with a Christian organization or Christianity. CLJ has taken measures to protect itself from becoming "just another social service agency" through the careful selection and specialized training of its staff and volunteers, and by requiring that HERC's director be on CLJ's pastoral staff.

HERC has a rigorous selection process which insists that its high level staff and volunteers who teach or form mentorship relationship with the youth at HERC are Christians who share the same beliefs as CLJ. Chaletta Clark, the Mentorship Coordinator, interviews every potential volunteer regardless of her familiarity with the person to get an understanding of each person's relationship with Christ. Those who are selected then go through a training program taught by The Navigators, and evangelical parachurch organization, which trains people on how to provide "life-on-life discipleship".

Life-on-life discipleship is how Christians can bring other people to Christ by building strong, loving relationships with non-Christians and introducing them to Christ by simply living out their faith as they interact with non-Christians. The idea is that people will be drawn to Christ just by the way the person lives and the joy and love s/he exudes. This kind of training is particularly important because HERC's programs do not have explicitly religious activities as part of its programming; however, CLJ's desire is for the people with whom CLJ interacts to become Christians. CLJ's form of evangelism is through the relationships formed between the teachers, staff, volunteers and the students.

Another reason why CLJ feels it is important for staff and volunteers to be Christian is that CLJ's expect HERC's staff to rely on the power of prayer to keep HERC Christ-centered. HERC staff pray together regularly or God to be glorified through the program. They also pray that their interactions with the youth and that HERC's programs would continue to be in-line with God's will.

⁷⁶ In this situation, proselytizing was defined as forcing students to listen to the gospel or "shoving" the gospel down their throats

Finally, CLJ requires that the director of HERC not only be a strong Christian who is highly capable of running the program, but that s/he be on the pastoral staff of the church. Consequently, Samuel is mentored by Reverend Miranda and is subject to the highest standard of scrutiny and accountability. Samuel is expected to uphold the theological doctrines and values of the church in his behavior, actions, and decisions just as expected of the other pastors of the church.

CLJ's evangelistic goals have forced the leadership to make some difficult personnel related decisions. One example is when CLJ almost cut off its relationship with Lets Get Ready!, a college preparatory program taught at HERC by a group of devoted Harvard students. Lets Get Ready! includes SAT and MCAS prep classes as well as advising on college and financial aid applications. Although CLJ would always prefer to have Christians provide all their service, it was grateful and delighted to have the "best of the best" help and inspire disadvantaged youth to prepare for and get into college. CLJ's leadership also saw this as an opportunity to witness to the Harvard students who were forming relationships with CLJ's ministerial staff.

However, after several years of partnership, some of the Harvard students who were not Christians asked that the prayer time before the classes start be eliminated and also expressed a desire to expand their program to include mentoring the students. While CLJ is comfortable with allowing non-Christians to provide direct services, they feel strongly about limiting the role of non-Christians to the direct provision of services. Because CLJ's ultimate hope is that the youth who attend programs at HERC will come to faith through the witness of HERC staff and its volunteers, any CLJ believes that services that involve the development of a mentor-like relationship with the students must be provided by a Christian who has gone through Chaletta's screening process and The Navigator's training. As a church-based program, HERC was also unwilling to remove prayer from their programming to accommodate the Harvard students. After a period of discussion, the Harvard students recognized that HERC and CLJ provided the students certain benefits as a religious organization with which they could not compete. As a result, Get Ready agreed to limit its role to the provision of the college preparatory classes, respectfully tolerate the times of prayer, and they did not pursue a mentorship program with the kids.

PLACE

It is difficult to define what CLJ means by its community because CLJ's community means different things depending on the context. Initially, when CLJ thought of its community, it thought of it in two ways. First and foremost, the Latino community in Boston, was CLJ's community. CLJ began as a Latino church that was interested in helping its congregants, preserving its Hispanic culture and

heritage, and other people of Latino origin. That is why CLJ selected a location that was central for the different Hispanic communities within Boston and all of the sermons are in Spanish. Because the Hispanic community is spread throughout several neighborhoods, CLJ's community is widespread. However, CLJ also considers residents in its immediate vicinity the community that it is trying to impact. The concept of bringing social healing and change to its community by its presence and influence in the community, CLJ is talking about the South End and Roxbury.

CLJ's definition of its community may also be changing over time. Samuel believes that God is challenging CLJ's perspective on its community by bringing an increasing number of non-Hispanic people into its congregation. The fact that CLJ's programs serves a much broader population than just the Hispanic population, that the residents in the neighborhood are diverse, and people who are attracted to CLJ's social ministries have selected CLJ as their home church have contributed to the increasing ethnic diversity of the church and the changing definition of CLJ's community.

People

CLJ's work in the community cannot be understood without understanding CLJ vision for social healing and belief in the Liberating Spirit. The church leaders believe that when the church humbles itself, repents of its sins, and is faithful as described in 2 Chronicles 7:14 and God heals the land and promised that healing will look like the healing described in Joel 2:28, in which God promises to restore the people, reverse the curse that resulted from sin not only for the people within the church, but also in the community around the church. Isaiah 61:1-2 says, "The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ¹¹ ² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God." This is the role that CLJ sees itself playing in the community. As the church is faithful in going out in Jesus' name, loving in His name, and using its resources sacrificially, Samuel believes that the Spirit of God will "blow out" over the community and change the hearts of people in the community and in community institutions such that His values will reverse the works of Satan in the community and in people's lives.

However, CLJ believes that the change in people's hearts and social healing cannot occur unless people become Christians. The leaders of CLJ's understanding of social healing is defined by 2 Chronicles 13:7 and Elden Villafañe's concept of the "liberating spirit". Villafañe's asserts that people who accept Christ and therefore have the Holy Spirit in them have a personal experience that enables and pushes them to make changes in their personal lives. CLJ believes that when people become Christians they are filled with the Holy Spirit and freed from the bondage of sin, which allows them to make

dramatic changes in their lives. The Bible talks about the freedom and subsequent change in one's life that comes from being freed from sin and being forgiven by God because of Jesus Christ. Colossians 3:1-10 further describes the changes that occur in one's life when they accept Christ and are "Born-Again":

Since then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above. . . For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. . . Put to death therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry. . . You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things. . . since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on a new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. NIV Colossians 3:1-10

The church's desire is for people to accept Christ and benefit from the healing and transformation that comes from the power of the "liberating spirit" which bit believes brings "order to chaos."

Rev. Gregory Bishop told a story about a woman named Dominga to provide an example of what CLJ means by a "liberated spirit" and bringing "order to chaos". Dominga was a woman who had come to the church because one of her children was getting help through HERC. When Greg first met her, she was unmarried, but had been living with a "bad" guy for 10 years. She was overweight, had no ambitions, and little self-confidence. When she became a Christian, Rev. Bishop said it was, "as if a light bulb went on."

Dominga realized that she had the power to make drastic changes in her life and her community. She demanded that man she had been with for 10 years either marry her or move out. She started helping people in her neighborhood, held a Bible study in her home, lost weight, and she prayed for change in her community. She was living on a crime-ridden street in Dorchester and Dominga decided that she was going to fast and pray for the street. After one year, a SWAT team showed up one night and arrested all the people living on her street who had been involved in criminal activity. Rev. Miranda noted that the "transformation of our community is a result of what can happen to people when they are taught to apply Christianity to their daily lives." CLJ believes in the lifting affects of the gospel and that the gospel can have a deep impact on human lives: Rev. Miranda believes that "it can produce highly functional human beings."

Even though CLJ's programs such as HERC, the music classes, and the day care center that it plans to open do not have explicitly Christian or religious activities, CLJ's hope and goal is for the people who are served by its programs to become Christians and have their lives changed by the "liberating spirit". CLJ's vision for HERC states that it is "not satisfied by merely providing college preparatory services to the young people who seek help from us. . . . Therefore, one of the principle outcomes we have set for our Mentor Program is to create a 'Kingdom consciousness' in these kids. We encourage them to fashion

lives that mirror the Lord.” This is why CLJ insists that their staff and volunteers to be sincere Christians who agree with the church’s theological beliefs. CLJ wants people who participate in its programs must encounter Christ in the people who serve them and the staff and volunteers are trained to guide people to know Christ. In the mentorship program, the mentors will pray with their mentees if the mentee is open to it, and help mentees identify life goals for themselves that include how the mentee might relate to God.

Politics

The church’s theology and its ministry of social healing have been critical in shaping the political activity or rather inactivity of the church. While Rev. Miranda recognizes the practicality of having political connections and the occasional need to use those connections. However, CLJ is careful about its involvement in politics and has made some intentional decisions to stay out of politics. Four years ago, CLJ’s staff discussed whether the church wanted to pursue social justice or social healing: according to Samuel, they asked themselves, “should they speak to the structures of society or provide works of service and ministry in Christ’s name?” After much discussion CLJ’s leaders decided against pursuing social justice in favor of pursuing social healing.

CLJ’s leaders saw social justice activities as protesting, community organizing around specific issues, and activities that would require the church to empower people to defy or face authority, which is not an attitude that the church supports. Romans 13:1-5 instructs Christians to submit and respect the authority of the government: “Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. . . Consequently, he who rebels against the authority rebels against what God has instituted. . . Then do what is right and he will commend you.” The church is also wary of initiatives or organizations that, as Samuel put it, “seek to cloak every social issue in the garments of the kingdom.” Samuel sees this method as an illegitimate use of the prophetic voice or role of the church.

For these reasons, CLJ ended its relationship with GBIO. CLJ had attended some of the initial GBIO meetings. In fact, a meeting or two was held at CLJ. However, Rev. Miranda found that GBIO’s values did not match the church’s values and consequently did not think that it was worth investing a lot of time into. Although the church was interested in promoting the development of affordable housing, Rev. Miranda felt that GBIO’s confrontational and disrespectful stance against authority was un-Christian. In addition, he felt that there was no Christian or spiritual energy behind the leadership nor was there any commitment to Christian values. Rev. Miranda felt that GBIO was just trying to capitalize on the power that churches bring to the table to promote GBIO’s agenda. Rev. Miranda believes that Christian values call for Christians to promulgate justice and human progress in a different, more organic way.

CLJ's leadership decided to choose to influence policies and structural injustices through the long-term strategy of social healing. Its vision is to change institutional structures by changing the people, culture, and values that inform the community and society's institutions by praying, having Christians live out their faith, discipling key people who have powerful roles in the communities who are then confronted with Christian values, and proclaiming God's Word. Rev. Miranda feels that while institutions and laws can change overnight, the impacts of changing people's hearts and worldviews are permanent and the church should invest its time and resources into what will result in permanent change.

In retrospect, CLJ's leadership believes that focusing on social healing was the right decision because it has given CLJ more political influence than it would have gained through protesting or traditional political activism. Samuel believes that HERC has been a God given opportunity impact policy and politics on two levels because it chose social healing. Through HERC, CLJ is discipling the children of tomorrow and helping them take the first step towards influencing institutions of power by acquiring a college diploma.

CLJ's pastoral staff also firmly believes that the quiet testimony of the church's and its volunteers' genuine love and care for the people they serve, their diligence in providing a high quality service, and their faithfulness has won them the ear, respect, and favor of many high level government officials and people holding considerable power who, on their own initiative, ask CLJ for its opinion on educational policy. Samuel said, "By focusing on social healing, we are free of a political agenda. We are just out to heal and help people. That gives us power. That gives us, with ease, the mayor's ear. . . That comes from their recognition that we are doing an incredible work without an agenda and that we just care for the people." Simply by providing a high quality service that has had a tremendous impact on the lives of so many youth, or by what Christian would call "being faithful" Samuel has been invited by several high level government officials to meetings to discuss educational policy because they wanted his opinion. Because CLJ's method of political influence is to affect change from the "inside" instead of trying to affect change by attacking the government, Omar, CLJ's Youth Pastor, likes to refer to the way in which CLJ influences the government as "the prophetic system within the system."

CLJ feels that direct and public political activism are difficult to justify because there are very few issues that the church can legitimately stand behind. Evangelicals are very careful not to make extra-biblical rules or assertions. In addition, CLJ believes that if the Bible does not provide clear direction on an issue, God will unify His people around something that if it is His will. As a result, "when redeemed minds" or true believers are not in agreement on an issue or political position and there is not a clear command in the Bible regarding that specific issue, it is an indication that there is not an absolute right or wrong position. Consequently, the church as an institution, nor its leaders, will take a public position on the issue.

One example is the controversy over the MCAS. In late 2002, The Boston Private Industry Council called many community-based organizations, including CLJ, to solicit their assistance in calling students who were not going to graduate from high school if they did not retake and pass the MCAS. However, the members of the church were passionately divided on whether the MCAS was a legitimate test, whether the church should fight against the MCAS, or whether church should support it. Since, there is no clear direction given in the Bible on MCAS tests and the mature believers in the church were divided on the issue, the church could not agree to participate in the phone-campaign.

However, CLJ does not believe that its inability to take a public position on an issue means that the church has to ignore the issue. Samuel feels that the church prefers to respond to the problem by focusing on activities on which its believing congregation can agree. These are often activities that even secular organizations and leaders can support. While Christians within the church could not agree on the question of what should be done about the MCAS test, they did all agree that it was a good idea to help students perform better on a test that was going to have such a critical impact on these teenagers' lives. The church, on its own initiative, moved forward in addressing the needs of teenagers in its community by opening the first church-based MCAS preparatory course in the state approximately one month prior to the Boston Private Industry Council's request. Not only did the entire congregation support the program, but the mayor and other educational advocacy groups were also able to support the new course.

Another reason why CLJ does not pursue direct political activity and advocacy is that Rev. Miranda does not feel that it is an appropriate role for the church. He does not want the church to get bogged down in time consuming temporal fights. Instead, Rev. Miranda feels that it is better for the church to focus its resources on activities that the church is good at, which is discipling people. Rev. Miranda described his perspective by making an analogy to the technique American soldiers and marines use as they moved towards Baghdad. Like the American troops in Boston, CLJ is moving to disciple and win the people of Boston over to Christ and it cannot allow itself to get distracted by small skirmishes along the way. There is also a recognition that "Menino is not in charge". There is spiritual warfare going on between the powers of Satan and God and the church's role is to win back the City and areas that have been lost to Satan through spiritual means. However, the church does support the work of parachurch organizations like Focus on the Family, A Women's Concern, Prison Fellowship and is thankful for their existence.

However, there are a few issues about which the church can agree such as abortion and the practice of homosexuality on which the church and its leaders are willing to make their position public. While members of the congregation or pastoral staff might participate in demonstrations or petitions as individuals on these issues, it is still highly unlikely that CLJ would be found in picketing lines or

demonstrations, for reasons that are explained above. CLJ is more likely to actively support organizations that focus on these issues.

Reliance on God and God's Sovereignty

In talking to CLJ leaders, there is an overwhelming sense that the provision, timing, movement, and sovereignty of God are responsible for CLJ's current activities, accomplishments, and success. The church firmly believes in prayer and God's ability create opportunities for the church to have influence in the areas in which God would like them to influence. The role of the church is to be obedient and simply respond to these opportunities. Just as Joshua and the Israelites were able to conquer Jericho, a city with seemingly impenetrable walls, by simply marching around the walls according to God's timing and instructions, Samuel sees CLJ's role to simply be obedient to God's word, wait for God's timing, and be faithful in the meantime. Before starting HERC, the church had been praying that God would show them how He wanted to church to bring social healing to the Hispanic and the local community. Samuel believes that it was God's movement that brought secular organizations like the Nellie Mae Foundation and the Higher Education Information Center to CLJ.

Because CLJ believes that its ministries are ones that were initiated by God, the church believes that God will provide whatever is needed for them as long as the programs continue to be God's will. Consequently, in considering funding sources, they do not feel the need to accept funding that they feel would compromise their witness as Christians, regardless of how tempting the offer may be. They will instead wait for a source of money that fits with the church's values and interests.

CLJ also trust God for the impacts of its programs. CLJ firmly believes that HERC is God's program and He will "soften" people's hearts to the message of salvation. As Rev. Miranda put it, "Somehow as we do our part to be a witness to the community, showing that we are taking the needs of the community seriously, as people see how the center, with so little money, has been able to impact so many people, people will wonder. And the Holy Sprit will move" to touch people's hearts and minds to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and become Christians.

CASE STUDY: FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN REVERE

“You are the salt⁷⁷ of the earth. . . You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

-- NIV Matthew 5:14-16

History

First Congregational Church(FCC) in Revere has a history that reflects the commitment of its members to evangelicalism and God. The original Congregational Church was built in 1710 and held the distinctive beliefs of the Protestant Reformation. The church prospered and had a vibrant congregation for many years. However, in 1828 the membership abandoned the historic beliefs for which the Protestants had fought and decided to join the Unitarian Denomination, which rejects the deity of Christ. At that time, ten men, who were faithful to the Bible, decided to leave and start a new church. On April 4, 1828, the new church was organized. Even though they did not have a church building, the church grew and met for 20 years in various homes until the late 1840's, when it obtained property and built its present building in 1849. The building stands in the center of town on the corner of Beach Street and Central Avenue in Revere, Massachusetts.

When Reverend Nicholas Granitsas first came to the church in 1974, the church was in a precarious position. The church had reached its maximum membership in the 1940s when it had 400 members⁷⁸; however, the membership of the church dwindled over time and by the time Reverend Granitsas came to First Congregational, the church had 157 members, with only 40-45 people in the pews on a weekly basis. The total church budget was \$15,000, which included Rev. Granitsas's salary and the \$4,000 set aside for the oil bill. The entire congregation was comprised of elderly people and according to Rev. Granitsas, “Young people were people in their 60's.”

After doing some research and performing an informal survey, Rev. Granitsas discovered that there were 27,000 people within 1 mile of the church, and 1 out of 3 people thought that the church was closed. Considering its 'bad state' Rev. Granitsas felt that the church had to make some significant changes. He said, “The church had the options of moving away from Revere and starting over

⁷⁷ In this passage salt is usually interpreted as meaning that Christians act as preservers of God's principles in society or that Christians add God's “flavor” to society

⁷⁸ Roger S. Greenway & Timothy M. Monsma, *Cities: Mission's New Frontier* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989) 91.

somewhere else, closing down entirely, or shifting the ministries to reach the more Revere residents.” Today, FCC is a vibrant congregation and a place where people know to go if they need help. The change in First Congregational’s role in the Revere community has been the result of Rev. Granitsas’ leadership and the new life breathed into the church as it became more active in serving the community.

In 1975, Rev. Granitsas and the leadership of the church developed a list of objectives and goals for the church. Together, they created a Statement of Objective, which states, “The purpose of this church is to bring honor and glory to the name of Jesus Christ through worship, fellowship, service, and evangelism.” They also identified five goals that would help guide them towards achieving that objective. These goals are listed below and are grouped according to categories chosen by the leadership:

The Church’s Relationship to Its Lord:

Goal #1: As disciples of our Lord, we seek to grow in our relationship to Him through worship, prayer, Bible study that our understanding, faith, and obedience might be increased.

The responsibilities of Members to One Another:

Goal #2: As Christian brothers and sisters, we seek to develop a loving fellowship that reflects the compassion of Christ and envelops all members of the church

Goal #3: As members of the body of Christ, we seek to encourage each member of the church to use her/his God-given gift(s) to strengthen the church and more effectively do Christ’s work.

The Mission of the Church to the World:

Goal #4: As the light of the world and the salt of the earth, we seek to show forth the love of Christ by helping the weak and needy of the world and bringing Christ’s truth to bear upon our culture.

Goal #5: As followers of Jesus, we seek to share the goodness of Christ’s offer of forgiveness of sin and new life, making disciples of all who respond to His call.

It is important to note that the pursuit of any one goal is not mutually exclusive and FCC’s activities often contribute to several of the goals at the same time. Goals #4 and #5, in particular are often accomplished together. However, the goals were separated on the list to make the goals more explicit. The objective and subsequent list of goals FCC adopted in 1975 is what pushed the church towards active involvement in the Revere community and has continued to guide the ways in which the church engages the community.

Rev. Granitsas felt that the congregation had already made progress on the first three goals before he had arrived. He believed his congregation members were Christians who loved God, knew the Word of God, and truly cared for one another. However, the church had done nothing on goals #4 and #5. Consequently, for the next few years following 1975, Rev. Granitsas and the congregation focused on

trying to figure out what it could do for the community and how it could be salt and light in the community.

The congregation tried to identify the greatest social need in community that the church could meet given the assets it had. At that time Revere was a low to moderate income community and as Rev. Granitsas put it, “You didn’t have to look hard to figure out what people needed. The needs were very obvious.” Once the congregation had identified the needs in the community, it began to looking at what assets it had to meet those needs and was initially discouraged because the congregation felt that it had little to offer. As mentioned earlier, the church had a budget of only \$15,000 which was already spoken for, the congregation only had three college educated members including the pastor, and the congregation members were all blue collar workers who did not have many financial assets of their own to contribute. However, the congregation quickly realized that the church had a great asset in its building. There was a significant amount of space in the building that could be made available to the community and it was conveniently located in the downtown area in front of several bus stops.

Programs

FCC’s selection of ministries are guided by the Christian principles of good stewardship, justice, ministering to the forgotten, and dependence on God. Residents of the City of Revere have many needs that the church could try to address. However, given its limited resources and mission as a church, the church tries to select ministries that serve needs that it feels are being neglected or people who are being underserved. FCC feels that this is how it can be good stewards of the resources that God has entrusted to it and distinguish itself from social service agencies. As a church, FCC is not interested in being just another social service agency, they are trying to be a witness for Christ through their services. Goal # four has to be more than “that’s a good thing” as Rev. Granitsas put it. They don’t want to be do-gooders. They don’t see it as social action. The church is trying to be a witness for Christ. So it looks for opportunities to serve those whom society and the government have forgotten or chosen to neglect. The members of the congregation ask themselves, “Who are the people that nobody cares about? Where is injustice reigning?” The church sees its proper role as the role of filling in the gap, and filling it with high quality services. As a result, the services that First Congregational provides changes as the needs in the community and provision of services by other agencies changes.

Most importantly, FCC attributes the development and success of all of its programs to God. It sees each of them as the result of prayer and God’s provision in accordance with His will. Rev. Granitsas said, “So much of what we did were answers to prayer.” The next few sections highlight the stories of three of FCC’s programs which reveal the way in which FCC starts, designs, and runs its programs.

Day Care

Seeing the great need for day care in the community, the church embarked on an effort to provide services to the community by trying to open a private Christian day care program in 1975. There was no day care center in Revere at the time and the church felt that it could meet a lot of needs. The church felt strongly about making sure that the only day center in Revere would at the very least serve low-income families and mothers trying to get off of welfare. Consequently, FCC tried to get government subsidized slots so that poor families could afford the day care. However, the church was unable to secure government slots for the first year of the day care program. Rev. Granitsas said, “the government laughed in our face” because established non-profit community-based organizations often struggled to successfully run day care programs and FCC was significantly less sophisticated than most non-profit organizations at that time.

Despite the negative response from the government, FCC was convinced that it was called to open a day care center for the community and it faithfully prayed about it and pursued whatever steps necessary to open a day care center. The church contacted the state to get the church licensed to provide day care, and FCC received what it considered an answer to prayer. The state regulator who came to look at the space on FCC’s church was very supportive of FCC’s efforts because he felt that Revere really needed a day care center. He interpreted the regulations in layman’s terms for Rev. Granitsas and told FCC what the minimal changes FCC would have to make to the space to obtain approval. He even told FCC about cheaper alternatives that were acceptable to the State but were not included in the written regulations, saving the church from spending money it did not have.

The church then prayed that God would provide a highly qualified Christian teacher to run and teach the day care program. Because the church could only pay \$30 a week, the church felt that if it was able to find someone he or she would be an answer to its prayers. Sure enough, a professional Christian woman who was credentialed to provide day care and believed in FCC’s vision agreed to take the position to get the program off the ground. Rev. Granitsas exclaimed, “She got prayed up! There’s no other explanation for it.” Although it took several years to start the program, FCC’s day care program opened its doors to the community in 1976 with Rev. Granitsas as the Executive Director, two zero interest loans of \$1,000, 2 children, donated equipment from congregation members, and a teacher working for \$30 a week and remained open for 20 years.

Due to the day care center’s success and reputation for high quality services, community support for the day care center grew and many different people pitched in and helped the church secure a government subsidized day care slots in its second year of operation. Rev. Granitsas believes that the community’s support for the day care center grew because it recognized that the church was trying to

meet the real needs of people in their community. Several people in the community, unbeknownst to FCC took the initiative and advocated for government slots at FCC's day care center by directly calling the government agency responsible for approving the slots. In addition, the regulator who helped FCC obtain its license also advocated for government slots on FCC's behalf. As a result, FCC was awarded government slots in its second year of operation and was able to serve approximately 37 children a year.

Even though the day care program was partially funded by government paid slots approved by the government, there was some religious content in its programming. The curriculum did include some instruction in the Bible in the form of biblical stories. They also taught a little about cultural and Jewish holidays. Neither the government nor the parents objected. However, most of the evangelism was relational. As FCC had hoped, the parents, impressed by the love their children were receiving at the day care center, started asking about the church or Christianity and several of the families began attending the church and several of them became Christians. Some of the kids who attended the day care center are now adult members of the church and they bring their children to First Congregational.

After 20 years, FCC ended the day care program when it felt that the church was being called to commit its resources to a different ministry. Despite the low pay, First Congregational had been able to attract extremely highly qualified staff from across the country. As a testament to the high quality of their staff, some of the day care staff took very prominent positions after leaving the day care center. One woman became one of the top officials in early childhood development in Wisconsin, another woman ran the Early Childhood Development Program for the City of Revere. The church believed that such high quality staff, despite the meager salaries, was a gift from God and a sign that God's blessing was on this program.

However, during Governors Wells and Salucci's terms there was a freeze in cost of living increases and it became difficult to attract high quality staff. The congregation prayed about the situation for approximately a year because it firmly believed that it had to be able to provide high quality day care in order for the service it was providing to be a good witness. Otherwise the church felt that it would just be providing another social service. However, CLJ was still unable to attract high quality staff for the day care center after 1 year of praying. Because God had consistently stopped providing high quality teachers for several years and did not provide high quality staff for the day care center despite the churches' prayers, the church's leadership took it as an indication from God that CLJ needed to close the day care center and redeploy the church's resources for a more pressing need in the community. Although it was difficult for some of the church leadership to let go of the day care center, Rev. Granitsas said that they realized that the community no longer needed First Congregational to provide the service. Several other day care centers had opened in Revere since 1974 and the community had greater needs on which they needed the church to focus.

Refugee Resettlement

Starting in 1975, FCC took on another labor of love when it became actively involved in a refugee resettlement program that had a significant impact on the Revere community and the way in which First Congregational church engaged the community. After the Vietnam War, Rev. Granitsas' family, with permission of the church, took in a family of 6 from Vietnam in 1975 that was one of the government's "free cases".⁷⁹ In 1979, the church sponsored another Vietnamese family, consisting of a mother and three kids. This family was also a "free case". Rev. Granitsas believes his congregation members who, at that time, consisted of mostly blue collar Caucasian people and had a different world view from the Vietnamese, were willing to sponsor these Vietnamese families because they were "heart people" – people who are compassionate and very loving.

During this time, a young couple in the church really had a heart for the ministry and wanted to do more to help families that were free cases. With Rev. Granitsas's encouragement, the couple prayed about it for some time. One day a blue-collar Italian, Catholic man in the neighborhood donated his 9-room, 6BR house to the church, which the church took it as a sign from God to continue sponsoring these refugee families. As a result, the couple that had a heart for the refugee resettlement ministry moved into the house and committed themselves to serve the refugee families that the church sponsored. From 1980-1985 the church sponsored 225 "free cases" most of which were from Vietnam and Cambodia. Seventy-five people lived with seven church families, while the rest lived in the 6-bedroom house with the young couple. Church members taught English classes, provided tutoring, helped with health issues, job search tasks, and educational issues. The program ended when there were no more "free cases"

The free case families were not necessarily Christian when they arrived in Revere, and the services offered by FCC through the refugee settlement program did not have much religious programming. However, the relational evangelism FCC practiced did result in many of the families becoming born-again Christians. With FCC's help the Cambodians started Cambodian Evangelical Church which still meets in FCC's church building. Although the Cambodian Evangelical Church is not a large church, it was the first Cambodian church in the region. This church provided technical assistance and training to other groups that were interested in starting a Cambodian church for many years.

Ministry to the Homeless

Members of FCC began a ministry to help the homeless families living in Paul Revere Inn due to an overflow in the homeless shelters in the early 1980s because they were moved by the plight of

homeless families in their community. The State had put homeless families in low-cost, low-quality motels for a period up to 90 days per motel when their family shelters are full. Several families were located in the Paul Revere Inn in room that had extremely limited cooking facilities. After learning about these families' living conditions and their needs, several members of FCC were moved to help them. The group of congregants then moved forward, launched Barley Loaves and Fishes, and provided hot, home-cooked meals to the families in Paul Revere Inn once a week. By the mid -1980s the state had built additional family shelters and stopped placing families at the Inn, at which point First Congregational Church ended the program since there was no longer a need.

However, with the recent downturn in the economy, the State began placing families at the Ocean Lodge Motel, and a modified version of Barley Loaves and Fishes was revived as "Ocean Lodge Ministry" in 2002. FCC realized that homeless families were again being placed in Revere when FCC members met these families at the food bank it runs. Soon afterwards, Mass Housing Coalition called a meeting of its Circle of Friends, a group of faith-based organizations of which First Congregational was a part. Elaine Seidlinger, who now leads Ocean Lodge Ministry, attended that meeting and was moved to do something by the story of one homeless mother who was living at Ocean Lodge. Although this woman was only 21 years old, she already had two children and was pregnant with a third child.

Today a group of 9 to 12 congregation members faithfully serve the homeless families living at Ocean Lodge in whatever ways they can. Some of the more structured forms of service include: a backpack drive to ensure that kids have what they need for school, personal items drives, Christmas caroling, rides to church, door-to-door delivery of food from the food bank to eligible families. Last year, Ocean Lodge Ministry provided 56 children with backpacks that were filled with age appropriate notebooks and school supplies. The children in families living at Ocean Lodge who are too young to go to school also receive age appropriate gifts so that they do not feel left out.

Elaine believes that the ministry's goal is to provide emotional and physical support to these families during this difficult time in the hopes that they will come to know Christ and "find the peace that comes from Christ". Consequently, members of the Ocean Lodge Ministry do things with and for the homeless families on an informal basis as well. For example, Elaine has befriended several of the families living at the Ocean Lodge. One of the woman she befriended meets with Elaine weekly for Bible study and they call each other just to see how the other one is doing. Sometimes, some male congregation members try to support the fathers in these families by taking out fathers individually for a night of fun to give them an opportunity to relax and momentarily forget the immense pressure they feel because of their inability to provide for their families.

⁷⁹ "Free cases" are refugees that do not have any relatives or friends in the U.S. that they want to join, and, therefore, are "free " to be resettled anywhere if they have a sponsoring organization.

Ocean Lodge Ministry also invites these families to the church's weekly play dates so that the children can have somewhere to play other than their hotel rooms and meet other children in the community. The group also takes requests for needs on a rolling basis. Each person in the group is assigned to personally check up on the families to see how they are doing and works with the social worker to find out what the families need. For example, if they hear that someone needs a playpen, the group calls whomever they know within the church that has a playpen and delivers it to the family. Two families at Ocean Lodge are now attending First Congregational Church and both of the mothers have become Christians as a result of this ministry.

As Elaine explained, Ocean Lodge Ministry's goal is to "plant a seed of Christ in the families." Her hope is that these families will be encouraged to have hope because someone from Ocean Lodge Ministry shows up at their door weekly with a smile and wants to be their friend, helps meet their basic needs, loves them regardless of whether they show up at church, and accepts them the way they are. Elaine believes that FCC's ministry is different from other social service programs because members of the Ocean Lodge Ministry do not judge the families at Ocean Lodge. Elaine said, "We are just there to show them Christ's love" and they do not begin giving people advice until they have formed a friendship with the families, and have thereby earned the right to give the families advice or their opinions. Elaine was quick to mention that the advice giving goes both ways once they become friends. Even though Ocean Lodge Ministry's goal is for people to come to know Jesus, its members do not say anything about Jesus unless people are ready to hear it. FCC hopes that these families will understand that the members of Ocean Lodge Ministry love them and care for them because of Jesus Christ and that these families, will over time, become more interested in learning about Jesus. Some families do make that connection. One woman asked Maria and Lenny, a couple in Ocean Lodge Ministry who visits the Lodge almost every day, "Do you really believe?" and Maria answered, "Yes."

Ministry to the Elderly- Angels for the Elderly

Angels for the Elderly is a program designed to honor, love, and minister to the elderly in Revere by providing them a first class dinner for the elderly (60 and older) twice a year and also provides them individually tailored Christmas gifts. In 1998, Carl, an FCC member since 1979, began to feel a strong calling to serve the elderly in his community. He felt saw the church doing an incredible ministry to the children and youth in the community but noticed that there was nothing being done to serve the elderly. After one year of prayer, Carl was still feeling this burden on his heart. He spoke to Rev. Granitsas who encouraged him to continue praying and to pursue his interest.

Carl had been praying for direction from God as to how he could serve the elderly. One day, Carl and his two friends decided to try to serve an 80-year old woman in the congregation. Using their own

money, they bought her a present and took her to the hairdresser. These initial steps shaped the ministry that soon developed. Shortly thereafter, Carl and Rev. Granitsas made an announcement to the congregation about a starting a ministry for the elderly. The large show of interest in the ministry combined with an anonymous donation of \$200 to the church kicked off the ministry and Carl decided to call it Angels for the Elderly.

To Carl, everything about Angels for the Elderly is “Christ-centered” and that is really important to him. Angels for the elderly has two main events designed to help the elderly “find new friends and learn of God’s love for them.” The events consist of a thanksgiving and Christmas meal that have been running for the past five years. Angels for the Elderly sends out personalized invitations to 150 seniors 60 years of age and older. The invitation has grown considerably over the years as the guests add their friends’ names to the invitation list every year. Approximately 90 seniors attend the events.

In their effort to provide the elderly with a special service, the Angels for the Elderly team tries to prepare for every detail. There are always two or three nurses at the event just in case any of the elderly need medical attention. All of the nurses are members of the church. One team member provides door-to-door service to all the guests who cannot make it to the event on their own. The servers and everyone who will be working at the event go through a fire drill, in which they are instructed on how to help the seniors evacuate the building. When the guests walk into the room, they are greeted by people at a registration table where the seniors sign in, providing their most recent contact information. They are also encouraged to add their names to a Wish List, which asks them to list an item that would help make their lives more comfortable. They then enter into a room in one of the wings of the church that is nicely decorated. Waiters and waitresses, who are volunteers from the church, dress in white shirts and black bottoms wait and serve guests a 7 course meal, which is cooked by church members except dessert.

The guests are entertained by FCC members who sing some Christian songs, perform a skit written by congregation members as a way to share the gospel message. The choir director also leads a sing-a-long time. The seniors sometimes get up and dance or get up and sing a song for the rest of the guests. Carl and Rev. Granitsas goes from table to table to greet each person who comes to the event. There is always an elaborately decorated cake from a local bakery that honors the seniors by saying something like “Thank You Seniors, love Jesus”. All the guests are then provided home-baked, individually wrapped breads before they leave.

The same seniors are invited back in early January for another meal with events very similar to those at the Thanksgiving meal; however, instead of taking down the seniors’ wish list, Angels for the Elderly distributes each senior with the gift they requested in November. Most of the gifts consist of gift certificates for dinner, haircuts, clothing, bathrobes, slippers, and gifts that their insurance doesn’t cover like bathtub chairs, grippers for picking up items, or new eyeglasses.

Angels for the Elderly hopes to expand their ministry starting next year to include more follow-up with the seniors. Although the Angels for the Elderly ministry team work almost all year to raise funds for the events and gifts, and to make preparations for the events, they do not interact with many of the seniors on their invitation list throughout the year. Carl hopes to organize the team to call the seniors regularly throughout the year to find out how they are doing and whether they need any help so that Angels for the Elderly could provide for the needs of the seniors throughout the year and not just at the events.

One Failed Attempt

First Congregational Church tried to build affordable elderly housing about 25 year ago because there was an inadequate amount of affordable housing for seniors in Revere. They saw other churches developing senior housing in other communities and they thought they could do it too. Even though they had no experience in housing development they did come close to getting the government funds necessary to make the project financially feasible. They applied for funding for 2 years, were told by MHFA that they came really close to getting funded, but were never awarded the money. FCC has not pursued elderly housing development since then because other developers have stepped in and developed a sufficient senior housing in Revere.

Partnerships

FCC is willing to work with other organizations, but it does not to enter into relationships that will compromise its values, dictate the programming, or control FCC's hiring practices. This principle impacts what kind of funding FCC will pursue to finance its programs and with whom FCC ultimately ends up partnering. Although First Congregational is willing to be flexible, they are not willing to be so accommodating to other people that its programs lose their Christian character. For example, FCC allows people from other organizations including local Catholic churches and the Rotary Club to volunteer at the pantry. However, when a non-Christian who was volunteering at the pantry began complaining that the time of prayer just before the food pantry opened made him uncomfortable and requested that FCC to stop doing it, FCC was unwilling to accommodate his request.

The food pantry is operated by a church and even though the only form of active proselytization is a man who hands out Christian tracts to people as they enter into the building, FCC is trying to rely on God to bless people through the food pantry. FCC feels that praying before the food pantry opens is a big part of the way FCC relies on God's power. FCC prays that God would help the volunteers serve people

well and to bless the people who come to the food pantry. Because FCC was unwilling to eliminate the prayer time, the volunteer ended his relationship with the food pantry.

Funding

Although FCC has accepted government funds for some of its programs, it does not pursue government funding until it has determined that the government funding fits FCC vision for the program and not the other way around. Rev. Granitsas believes that the best method of ensuring the FCC's values and vision are not compromised is to design the program first and then pursue whatever money is available that will enable the church to implement the program in the way they envisioned. Granitsas is not opposed to the performance standards or reporting requirements that funding from the government or foundations require, but he is careful not to be foolish about the strings attached with the money. He said, " 'Give to Caesar what is Caesar's'. Some of what you have to do is ridiculous, but that's okay. I'll jump through the hoops as long as the church doesn't have to compromise on its faith." FCC will not accept funding from organizations that reduces FCC's control over hiring practices or tries to dictate the programming of its services. In the case of the day care program, there was no problem with accepting government money because the government didn't complain about their prayer or teaching of the Bible. FCC considers all funding that fits its criteria, regardless of who's writing the check, a provision from the Lord.

Although FCC's has received money from the government, the United Way, some other organizations, and fundraising events to fund its programs, FCC's prefers to have its program funded by the giving of its congregation members who, Rev. Granitsas believes, should give with no strings attached. Rev. Granitsas feels strongly that people in the congregation should be financially supporting God's work. He feels that it is an issue of stewardship and faith. He said, "There are a lot of people that have come forward to give more money than they could really afford, but they were moved by the need and gave." While he does not want to be legalistic about it, Rev. Granitsas wants his congregation to practice that kind of sacrificial giving because it is biblical.

Personnel

The personnel issue is extremely important because First Congregational's ministries are dependent on the members of the congregation. Teams or ministries are formed based on the interests and gifts of the people interested in pursuing a particular ministry. There is usually one person in the congregation who has a particular "burden" or strong desire to serve a certain group of people or focus on

a particular issue. If an activity is within the church's goals, and there is a group of people within the congregation who not only share the interest or vision but also have the gifts to carry out the ministry the presumption is that it is God's will for the church to pursue that ministry. In FCC's history, it has often been the case that there is an unexpected provision provided at the time the ministry is announced that further supports the church's feeling that the ministry is blessed by God.

The church also firmly believes that the staff and leaders in each program are leaders raised by God for that specific purpose. To this day, Rev. Granitsas is convinced that the staff who came to work at their day care center were gifts from God. "Unless God raised up these people we couldn't open without a high quality person. We had to get someone who was gifted. . . there is no way that we could have attracted these people." Because the First Congregational Church was not able to secure government slots for its day care center in the first year, it had very little resources with which to run the day care center. However, the church felt that if it could somehow attract a high quality director /teacher who would provide high quality day care the church could run the program. The first director and teacher in First Congregational's day care program was a woman with teaching experience who agreed to start earning only \$30 a week. Rev. Granitsas said, "She was basically volunteering to get the project off the ground. . . She was first class.. . she was totally sold out over the vision." Other directors moved to Revere from all over the country to run and teach at the small day care center.

Because Rev. Granitsas believes that the people within his congregation who lead the different ministries are people chosen by God for those ministries he has a very decentralized managing style. In addition to being a practical management style for an organization that wants to multiply its ministries, Rev. Granitsas prefers a decentralized management style is best because he believes that these people are given visions and specific gifts from the Lord. Consequently, he believes that the pastor should not get in the way by telling these people what or how they should be pursuing or running their ministries. Rev. Granitsas said that he sees these leaders doing things that he never would have thought of or implementing ideas in ways that he would not normally do, and firmly believes that the success of FCC's ministries and the ways in which the ministries have impacted people's lives are directly related to the fact that he was not involved and God was moving. He noted, "They are blue collar people with maybe a high school degree. Most of these people would not impress anyone in terms of the world's credentials, but they are doing things that other people could only dream about doing. God's wisdom makes foolish the wisdom of this world."

However, the church does not entrust its ministries to anyone with a good idea and just let them run free. In addition to having the appropriate gifts and talents to carry out a ministry, people are given leadership responsibilities and a considerable amount of freedom within their ministries because they have earned the confidence of the pastor and other church leaders. These people's theological beliefs

must be doctrinally sound, they must live up to the moral and ethical standards of the church, and the pastor must have confidence that they will have enough discernment to know when to check out ideas with the pastor: Rev. Granitsas needs to know that they will not act out in presumption. These people must show that they understand and value what is being entrusted to them by the church before they are given the authority to lead a ministry. Luke 12:48 instructs: “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”

Even though the church has been “burned” twice while following this model of management, Rev. Granitsas believes that empowering people within the congregation and building up their leadership skills has enabled them to grow and blossom. He said, “Maybe it’s part of my gifting, but I’ve been so pleased with empowering people because some of the people who have come into leadership would not have been thought of as leaders. It’s been amazing to see what God has done through them.” Rev. Granitsas also feels that putting “power in the wrong hands” could be avoided in the future by simply listening carefully to the advice of other people in church leadership. In those two instances in which the church had been “burned”, Rev. Granitsas admitted that he had ignored warning from other people in the church that those two people would not be good leaders.

To date, FCC has not had any problems limiting its staff or program leaders to Christians because all of its ministries are run by teams consisting of its own congregation members and most of its programs do not receive funding from outside sources. However, FCC is adamant about having full control over its hiring practices. Rev. Granitsas explained that FCC’s members are driven by the love of Christ, their gratitude for their salvation, and their subsequent desire to love people so that they might also know the love of Christ. He said, “They are not ‘do-gooders’ [people who do things for others only because it’s the right thing to do] These are blue collar families who do it out of their love for the Lord and their spiritual walk. The hands-on work they do takes unselfishness and you have to be really motivated. That motivation is there with evangelicals.” Consequently, FCC believes it is critical that it has full control over the selection criteria used for the people who staff and volunteer for its ministry programs. Rev. Granitsas added, “Without it churches feel like they are stripped of the very thing that gives them the impetus to serve which is who they are. They ‘deliver the goods’ because of their faith.”

The special difference and motivation that Rev. Granitsas is referring to becomes abundantly clear when one meets the people who run and volunteer in First Congregational’s ministries. Their gentleness, generosity, humility, love for Christ, and pure love for others is evident when you meet them and it is a blessing to interact with them regardless of one’s faith. Carl and Elaine were both extremely gracious when I interviewed them. Both Carl and Elaine offered me coffee and tea, they opened up their homes to me, they spoke lovingly about the people with whom they worked and served. Their compassion and sincere desire to help the people is undeniable. Elaine did not hesitate to lead me by car

to for what felt like several miles to my next meeting because I was not sure how to get to my next interview from her house and Carl was already waiting outside looking for me even though I had arrived 20 minutes early. Carl had already put out a spread of cookies and pound cake and before left, and before I left he asked if he could pray for me. Before I left, Carl also gave me a gift that his wife had made. In describing his fellow church members Carl told me that, "We are servants of Christ," and no other word than "servant" could describe Elaine's and Carl's attitude and manner. I could not help but have a smile on my face and feel like I had the privilege of meeting two very special people that morning.

Place

FCC considers Revere its community or its "Jerusalem" and its programs tend to target the people who live in Revere. As Rev. Granitsas put it, "Revere is our primary focus because if we don't focus on it, who else will?" However, First Congregational's vision is broader than Revere and its programs are not bound by any rules that limit who FCC can serve. Other factors contribute to First Congregational Churches broader vision as well which is a function of their various goals. Rev. Granitsas feels that the church's goal of bearing Christ's truth on culture naturally lends itself to having a broader audience and impact. FCC's support for missionaries across the world is also part of its broader vision for ministry.

The goal of being a good witness to non-believers broadens also FCC's definition of community. If the opportunity to serve someone arises the church does not hesitate to pursue it. The Angels for the Elderly program exemplifies this mentality. While most of the elderly who come to the dinners are from Revere, the list of invitees was developed through word of mouth and recommendations from the local seniors. As a result, some people who come to Angels for the Elderly events are also from Cambridge, Chelsea, the North End, Lynn, and even Rhode Island. This mentality also enables these ministries to continue serving families who leave Ocean Lodge Motel and relocate to other communities. While Ocean Lodge Ministry does not follow up on everyone who moves out of the motel, members of the ministry do continue their relationship with families with whom they have formed special relationships.

People

The church's vision is to share Christ with a hurting, needy world, through its worship, the sharing of its faith in Christ and through faith service to its community and the world at large. For FCC this vision translates into providing services to its community regardless of whether people come to faith in Jesus Christ. Rev. Granitsas said, " We are trying to bear witness to the faith and do the deeds of truth and justice – they are not only a means to an end. We don't make verbal proclamation the end, but should

always have the desire to bring people to faith.” As a result, the ministries are designed to meet people at their point of need and love them by providing them services or goods that they need with the hope that some would come to know Christ. This is why most of FCC’s services seem to simply be providing a service to meet a physical need. But, FCC believes that the services it provides and the loving manner in which its members provide the services makes a statement to the people about the character of Jesus Christ regardless of whether a sermon is preached during the programs. The congregation firmly believes in the adage, “Actions speak louder than words.” Even people who do not agree with the beliefs of the church recognize that the church and its members are living what they preach. Consequently, FCC’s work strengthens the reputation of the church and Christians.

However, FCC and its members are hoping that people they serve will have a conversionary experience because they believe that what people really need is Jesus. FCC knows that people need food, clothing, shelter, and love and they provide for people’s physical and emotional needs. But FCC and its members believe that the deeper need is a spiritual one and that can only be met if people accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Rev. Granitsas feels that liberal churches⁸⁰ miss the mark because of their perspective of sin and the gospel. “They don’t understand personal sin. They only understand institutional and cultural sins. But Jesus Christ is the difference. He changes lives over time.” Rev. Granitsas added, “There are people in this congregation who can tell you specifically how the gospel made a difference in their lives, especially those in rehabilitation programs. Take out the spiritual components of the program and you take out the most important part.” He then gave examples of people who successfully fought against drug addiction because of their relationship with Jesus, and men who gave up gambling and began to responsibly provide and lovingly care for their families after they became Christians.

Even though FCC and its members firmly believe that people need Jesus and want people to become Christians, FCC does not force the gospel on people nor does it try to take advantage of people’s desperation to get them to convert to Christianity. FCC’s prefers to a style of evangelism called relational evangelism. Relational evangelism is a model of evangelism that focuses on building a trusting relationship between the Christian and the non-Christian. The Christian shares the gospel only if he or she feels that the non-Christian with whom he has built a relationship is ready to hear it and usually waits until there is a natural opportunity to share the gospel. However, FCC’s programs do include some religious activities to remind people that the programs are being provided by a church and that Jesus loves them. Handing out religious tracts at the food pantry and the play *Angels for the Elderly* put on called

⁸⁰ Granitsas' definition of liberal churches included Unitarians, United Church of Christ, United Methodists, Presbyterians, left leaning reformed churches, American Baptist

“What’s Missing” are the most direct forms of proselytization in the programming for FCC’s services to the community.

Politics

Although individual members of the church have gotten involved in political activism or advocacy over the years for various reasons with the support of the pastoral staff, First Congregational Church has not been involved in political activism as a church for several theological and structural reasons. As a congregationally governed church any big decision needs to be agreed upon by the church before the church takes action, unless it is clearly a biblically “black and white” issue. Consequently, the church would have to spend a lot of time educating itself and all of its members about the issues before it could move forward.

While the church firmly believes that the church needs to speak to the culture of the community and that social engagement is good FCC believes that it has to be extremely careful because there are many dangers and pitfalls that the church needs to stay clear of. FCC and its leadership refrain from wedding themselves to positions on policies, issues, or regulations because they are complex. Rev. Granitsas also feels that there is a big difference between having a position on an issue and a policy. He feels that when issues are manifest in policy “things get fuzzy” because there are too many things beneath the surface of the policy which make it difficult to know what the church’s position should be.

Rev. Granitsas gave an example in which something as seemingly benign as a senior housing project in Revere became extremely complex. When he first moved to Revere he was appalled by the fact that the community was opposing a senior housing development. As a pastor and someone who should speak out on moral issues, he went to the City Council meeting to speak in support of the elderly and the housing project. However, he decided to wait and eventually learned that the opposition was coming because people in the community felt that there was some kind of corruption or underhanded dealing involved in this project. There was no way for Rev. Granitsas to know who was really speaking the truth. As a result, even though he thought the community should support elderly housing in general, he could not support that particular housing project without giving up some moral authority. “The church does not want to be used by ungodly people who would love to have the support of the church for their own benefit.”

The church also avoids politics because it believes that the role of the church is to be a moral voice and it needs to remain above the fray of politics. Rev. Granitsas feels that if one gets “involved in the world, you never know what you come up with.” According to Rev. Granitsas, it is considered normal in Revere to ask government officials for political favors. However, the church refuses to use its position to obtain

favors from the government, even for a good cause because the church is then expected or obligated to return a favor. Another danger that the church is intent on avoiding is the mistake of misleading people into associating Christians with a certain political party of position. “Supporting the Republican party is not equivalent to being a Christian or a requirement for a Christian.” Rev. Granitsas feels that many conservative Christians who have gotten involved in politics have gotten lost; they have blurred lines between what is the appropriate Christian response and their political party’s position. In order to avoid similar mistakes, Rev. Granitsas prefers to keep the church out of partisan politics.

However, the church and its leadership are willing to step forward into the political arena when it sees an injustice that no one is addressing that cannot be solved without getting involved with politics. For example, Rev. Granitsas did call a government official on behalf of a woman who had been repeatedly passed up on the waiting list for housing for several years because other people who had connections in the City had illegally gotten their names moved up on the list. The church members got actively involved in political issues and other types of services out of their love and concern for the families they were hosting. The racial tension pushed the church and its congregational members to get politically active to protect the Cambodian families, particularly their children. According to Rev. Granitsas the congregants who got involved in advocating for the Cambodian families were not political people and it was not in their nature to be political, “They never would have thought to or wanted to get involved in local or state politics, but they had no choice. They did it out of their love for these individuals and their families.”

FCC and its members believed that they had to step forward to protect the Cambodians in their community and bear Christ’s truth on the culture in Revere: Cambodians’ civil rights were being violated due to racism and they could not stand by and let it happen. One example is that the police sealed off approximately 5 city blocks that were considered the “Cambodian area” when 5 Cambodian men had allegedly committed a crime. During that time, the police did not let anyone in or out of the area, they went house to house and illegally searched homes, and they questioned young children without the permission of their parents and without their parents present. Another incidence was when of the City Councilors called a meeting at City Hall to talk about the “Cambodian problem”. However, instead of holding a constructive discussion about the racial tensions in Revere, the Councilor used the meeting as a forum to complain about the Asians who were coming into the community and blame the Cambodians for most of Revere’s problems.

Finally, when one of the main public schools in Revere put all the Cambodian children, approximately 100 children, in one auditorium regardless of their age or ability and refused to adhere to state mandated ESL requirements the church sued the school district in Revere through the Department of Education. The Department of Education took over the legal process, giving the City two choices: forced

de-segregation or the creation of a new magnet school (voluntary de-segregation). After Revere's initial unwillingness to budge on their position, the City Council changed its mind within 1 week of the Dept of Ed's ultimatum and chose to create a new magnet school

It took 5 years to work through the issues. FCC is no longer involved in advocating for the Vietnamese and Cambodian children because it is confident that there is no longer a need for it to intervene. Granitsas feels that the State's strong actions and the strong position that the Attorney General's office took against the school due to civil rights violations had a lot to do with the quick turnaround in the City's attitude. Since that time, Revere has also established a Human Rights Commission – Rev. Granitsas used to chair the commission. Today, there are several organizations in Revere that help refugees and immigrant groups and move to proactively deal with problems. Once the Cambodian community was safe, other Asians came to Revere. The high school is now comprised of 50% minorities. However, Rev. Granitsas was also confident that if for some reason the need arose in the future, he and his congregation would roll up their sleeves and enter into the political ring for as long as their involvement was needed.

CASE STUDY: PARK STREET CHURCH

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.” --*NIV John 17:21-24*

History

Park Street Church is a church that has historically served as an informal guardian of evangelical theology, the teaching of the Scriptures, and the unity of like-minded believers. It was founded by a small group of Christians, primarily from the Old South Church, who broke off from their respective churches because of the increasing apostasy from the gospel and rising Unitarianism in New England, to form a "Religious Improvement Society" in 1804. Although the group faced a lot of opposition, it continued to meet for six years, hold weekly prayer meetings and lectures. This group, then founded Park Street Church in February of 1809.

Park Street Church's location was carefully selected by the church founders so that "it would serve as a beacon of the hope we have in Christ." The founders of Park Street Church had three specific reasons for citing their new church on the corner of Park Street and Tremont Street. They thought that the church's location at the busiest crossroad in Boston would enable the church to be a witness and remind its members of the task they had to bring their faith into their workplace. They wanted the sanctuary to be positioned so that congregation members could look out the windows of the sanctuary in one direction, see the Boston Common and the glorious work of creation be reminded of God's handiwork in nature, and then look out the window in the other direction and see Granary Burial Ground, be convicted by the brevity and finality of life, and "never forget the urgency of the task of sharing the message of the saving work of Jesus Christ to a world without hope. By 1810, the small congregation grew and raised over \$100,000 to complete the construction of the current Park Street Church building. The church's cornerstone was laid on May 1, 1809, and the building was completed by the end of that year. Consistent with the founder's intentions to serve as a beacon of hope, the steeple, rising 217 feet, was the first landmark travelers saw when approaching Boston for many years. Over the years, Park Street Church became a leader in missions, evangelical doctrine and the application of the gospel to social issues.

Starting in the late 1930's, Park Street Church arose once again to challenge what it saw as heretical views that churches in the United States had adopted and to gather churches across the country that seemed to be "holding up the fort" alone. However, this time, it was not to fight the liberalism within the churches as it had in the early 1800's, but the separatism, legalism, and anti-intellectualism, and social withdrawal of Fundamentalism. Rev. Harold John Ockenga, who served as the senior pastor of Park Street Church for thirty years played a pivotal role in the Evangelical Movement and is considered one of its most prominent leaders. His often-quoted speech titled "The Unvoiced Multitudes", which he delivered at the St. Louis convention in 1942, is said to have captured the feeling of many evangelicals across the nation. It lamented the lack of unity among evangelical Christians in America and spurred them to join together for the sake of the Christian witness.

Rev. Ockenga connected Park Street Church to the Evangelical movement not only by his outspokenness and leadership in the evangelical movement, but by his involvement in the founding of the National Association of Evangelicals and the publication Christianity Today. He also served as the President of Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary and Fuller Theological Seminary. And Reverend J. Elwin Wright, a pastor and member of Park Street Church, served as the first Chairman of the Temporary Committee for United Action Among Evangelicals, which later became the National Association of Evangelicals.

Park Street Church has not wavered in its convictions or theology since its founding in 1809. Today, Park Street Church continues to hold firmly to the "fundamentals" and to evangelicalism. A recent list of the church's stated goals to:

- live our daily lives in the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ and joyfully follow him,
- equip each believer in our community to share the gospel with family, friends and neighbors,
- reach out to our community with tutoring, job training, medical advocacy and food assistance
- love, pray for and fully support our missionaries

when taken together continue to capture the ways in which Park Street sought, and encouraged other churches, to be different from the fundamentalists and the liberal churches whose beliefs it had so passionately opposed in the past.

In late 1980's, PSC decided that it wanted to make a more express effort to reach out to the community and invite the community into relationship with the church, its members, and hopefully with Christ. Although PSC members had been involved in community service related activities in the past, many of the activities were scattered throughout the Boston Metro area and tended to cluster in communities where congregation members lived. However, in the late 1980s there was a movement to make a more intentional effort to reach out to the urban communities that were geographically close to the church.

Motivated by 1 John 3:18 which states, “Our love should not be just words and talk, it must be true love, which shows itself in action,” Park Street members wanted to reach out to the community by providing for the needs of the people in the community through urban ministry. As a result, PSC started several ministry efforts like Sunday night services, a tutoring program, and family ministries. In 1992, a group of congregation members led by Dr. Daniel Harrell, Associate Pastor, began the CityWorks Tutoring Program with the purpose of serving the Boston urban community in a practical way. PSC also formed volunteer partnerships with many Christian organizations to provide services to disadvantaged people such as Starlight Ministries and Chelsea Community Food Pantry. Eventually, CityWorks grew to include approximately 15 ministries and partnerships, creating an ongoing urban outreach program.

In 1998, the CityWorks name was given to a missions subcommittee appointed to support these and other grass-roots urban ministries in Boston with relationships with Park Street Church. Park Street adopted a missions statement for CityWorks which stated, “As a mission of Park Street Church, CityWorks is committed to supporting—with prayer, finances and active involvement—local urban ministries that proclaim and practice the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” Although the CityWorks committee no longer exists, Park Street Church does still support several different urban ministries which it collectively calls CityWorks.

Programs

The programs and partnerships within CityWorks fall under four main categories⁸¹: hunger and homelessness, community development, youth outreach, and pregnancy resources centers. Hunger and Homelessness ministries consist mostly of partnerships with Christian organizations such as the Boston Rescue Mission, Starlight Ministries, Chelsea Community Kitchen, Loaves and Fishes, and The Harvest. Park Street’s community development programs consists of a partnership with Boston Rescue Mission’s job training program called On the Job Inc and Fresh Start. The youth outreach programs consists of Angel Tree, a program done in partnership with Prison Fellowship Ministries, and CityWorks tutoring program. Although Park Street does not consider these programs part of CityWorks, the church does have several other programs that were started to serve the local community and as a means to reach out to the community. These programs include: Park Street Kids, a private day care center, Park Street School, an elementary school that will open this fall, FOCUS, a ministry to international students and people in Boston.

⁸¹ These categories were provided by Park Street Church

Cityworks Tutoring

The CityWorks Tutoring Program was started by a group of 30 Park Street members in 1992 who were interested in serving people in low-income communities. They began by looking at the strengths of the church and assessing what the church could offer the community. The group recognized that Park Street was a wealthy church full of highly educated people. While the wealth and education levels of the people in the group would make it difficult for them to approach low-income people and try to help them out of poverty without looking patronizing, they felt that they could use their education to help students who were struggling with school and wanted tutoring.

The group started by trying to tie into existing programs that were being run by other churches; however, the group felt that it would be better for them to start their own program. Park Street was able to make a connection with a public middle school in Jamaica Plain. Dr. Harrell offered to provide 100 highly educated tutors to the school at least once a week, free of charge. He fully disclosed that they were a church-based group and that they might pray or share the gospel with the students if an appropriate moment arose. Despite the potential for proselytization, it seemed that Dr. Harrell had made an offer that the school just could not refuse. The program was very successful and grew to the point where CityWorks Tutoring Program was providing tutoring services to several schools throughout Boston.

After hearing about the tutoring program at Curley Middle School in Jamaica Plain, Somerville High School, approached CityWorks Tutoring Program and asked if it could provide tutoring at the high school. This relationship has been very positive and is the only school with which CityWorks Tutoring Program has maintained a relationship. Today, CityWorks sends 20-25 volunteers to Somerville High School two times a week for 1½ hour tutoring sessions in whatever subjects are needed.

The relationships with the other schools ended over time with the turnover of school staff, particularly school principles. CityWorks Tutoring Program requires that each school it partners with have a coordinator who works with students and the leader of the tutoring program to coordinate program details. With turnover, either the new principles unwilling to commit a staff person or there was no one at the school who was interested in fulfilling that role.

CityWorks Tutoring Program has continued to offer tutoring to students at Somerville High School even though these students do not match the original “demographic” that the program was established to help. The CityWorks Tutoring Programs was started with a vision to help disadvantaged children living in the City. However, neither the church nor Mary is concerned about it. Dr. Harrell noted that the relationship with Somerville High has “just been so good over the years” and that the church’s commitment to the ministry was based on Mary. As long as Mary was interested in running the ministry, the church would continue to support her and the CityWorks Tutoring Program. Mary Harvey, the current leader of the program, feels that it is still God’s will for the program to be working with

Somerville High School. She believes that the fact that she always has the exact number of tutors she needs for the number of students who show up, both of which varies from week to week, is an indication that God is continuing to bless the program. She said, “Every week, God manages to provide for the needs of the week. When He stops providing, then I will know that it’s time to move on.”

Family Ministry

As Dr. Harrell, Associate Pastor of PSC, puts it, evangelical churches tend to focus on traditional issues such as family and Park Street is no different. Park Street’s commitment to supporting families is reflected by the fact that it has a full time Minister to Families even though families make up a small percentage of its congregation and the programs it offers to the community. Park Street Church’s commitment to families is deeply rooted in its theological understanding of the definition and purpose of families:

Park Street Church is committed to being a church family where adults, youth and children are transformed by the love of the Lord and love toward one another. Families Together offers events and learning opportunities for the whole family. God had given us families as a metaphor of our intimate relationships with one another in the body of Christ. As we do all that we can to support the lives of our families at Park Street Church, we also offer a clear picture of who we are as Christians - the family of God, brothers and sisters in Christ.⁸²

In its effort to support and love families, Park Street Church opened a private, Christian pre-school called Park Street Kids in 1998 and plans to open an elementary school called Park Street School in fall 2003. The schools are an outgrowth of the interests of a group of Park Street members who wanted to meet the needs of the Beacon Hill/Back Bay community and have a school where they could send their children to obtain a high quality education that nurtures the whole child. There was a group of mothers in Park Street Church that had been advocating for a Park Street run pre-school. At the same time, Kris Perkins had spent some time trying to identify the needs of Beacon Hill/Back Bay families by sending its staff to hang out at the playgrounds to talk and listen to the parents there. Kris, learned that schooling was one of the greatest concerns for the residents. There is one public school for local residents in Chinatown which is in walking distance for many families, but only 50% of the children in the community can attend due to the City’s desegregation/busing program. Although there are three private schools and pre-schools in the area, they all had long waiting lists.

According to Kris, as he and the group of mothers advocated for the pre-school, “the leadership of the church embraced the vision of a school located in our church.” Kris firmly believes that churches should focus on doing what they are good at doing. He said that the leadership of the church felt that

⁸² “Families Together, 30 Apr. 3002, <<http://www.parkstreet.org/ministries/families.shtml>>

because “Park Street was so full of educationally focused people, education was a need that Park Street thought it could meet in an excellent way.”

Although PSC established Park Street Kids and Park Street School as separate 501(c)(3) corporations with a separate Board of Directors from PSC’s Elder Board, Kris explained that “there is a very intimate and intentional relationship between the two organizations.” Not only did the vision for the schools originate at PSC, but all the current board members are PSC members, the schools being run in PSC rent-free, and most of the teachers are PSC members. The school also actively promotes PSC’s activities and family programs. Although Park Street Kids’ Board of Directors has full control over the two schools, the board sees itself as an extension of PSC. According to Kris, many of the current members of the schools’ board would not be involved with the school if there was not a close connection between the schools and the church. As a result, the Board is currently considering adding a provision to Park Street Kids’ bylaws that will require that PSC members hold a certain number of seats on the board.

Based on the performance of the school in the past three years, it appears that PSC is meeting its vision for community outreach and evangelism through the pre-school. Park Street Kids immediately gained an outstanding reputation as a high quality school. Despite the fact that Park Street Kids informs parents that the pre-school is church-based and includes some basic instruction in Christian values and beliefs, school enrollment has almost quadrupled from 35 students in the first year to 120 students in its fifth year. Seventy-five to eighty percent of these children are not Park Street families – families who do not attend PSC. Some children are from Jewish families and a lesbian couple has also enrolled its child in the pre-school. As a result of the relationships formed through the pre-school, 5 families that were not previously attending church but enrolled their children at Park Street Kids are now attending Park Street regularly.

Park Street Kids is now preparing to open a private Christian elementary school called Park Street School. The elementary school would also enable the children of Park Street Kids to continue their education with Park Street and enable PSC to further its vision for meeting the educational needs of the Beacon Hill/Back Bay community. The need for additional schools for the local community was underscored when the government, on its own initiative, contemplated purchasing a one of Emerson College’s buildings to convert into a public school. However, when the City decided not to pursue the idea, Park Street Kids pursued the building and signed a Purchase and Sale Agreement with Emerson College for the 25,000 square foot building. The building will provide enough space for approximately 250 students: two classrooms for each grade level, and various specialty rooms such as an art room, library, computer lab, etc. The elementary school is expected to open in fall 2003 and classes at Park Street Church until the new school building is ready for occupancy.

PSC has spent a considerable amount of its own resources to get the schools off the ground. Park Street School spent \$900,000 to renovate One Park Street for the pre-school, \$300,000 of which came from money donated to Park Street Church in the 50's for 60's ago for a camp⁸³. Because the church sees the day care program as a form of outreach it wanted to make sure that the day care would be affordable to everyone in the community. Consequently, tuition for Park Street Kids was set at 20% less than the tuition of other private schools in the community. In addition, the church holds fundraising dinners annually to raise money for scholarships. Last year, Park Street was able to raise \$75,000 at the dinner, which the church committed to scholarships for low-income families that do not attend Park Street Church and would like to enroll their children in Park Street Kids. Due to its growth, Park Street Kids currently occupies the second, third and fourth floors of One Park Street.

The reputation that Park Street gained in the community through Park Street Kids has enabled it to secure some very generous forms of financing for the new elementary school. One of the mothers whose child is enrolled in Park Street Kids discussed the idea of the new school with one of her clients who she thought might be interested in the school. This individual, a Christian who does not attend PSC, provided Park Street a \$6 million bridge loan at 5% interest to acquire the site for the new school. Park Street Kids, Inc. also received an anonymous donation of \$500,000 in December 2001, as well as two \$150,000 challenge/matching grants from a charitable foundation in January 2002. However, Park Street Kids estimates that it will need \$12 million to complete the acquisition and development process and get the school open.

PSC is also trying to address the other needs of families living in Beacon Hill. Kris found that the second most prominent need families in the community expressed was support for their families. He heard parents express how hard living in downtown was on their families due to the lack of space for their children to play during the winter, as well as the lack of general support for families. Park Street responded by opening up its gym, which includes a full-size basketball court, to families in the community on Saturday. The gym is open to the community every Saturday from 10 AM to Noon for "Family Open Gym". The church provides donuts and families are welcome to play hockey, basketball, soccer, slides and much more "to help avoid those wintertime blues".⁸⁴ In addition to providing a healthy, warm, and safe place for children to play, PSC believes that the open gym time will provide opportunities for parents living in Beacon Hill to meet one another, form friendships, and support one another throughout the year. PSC hopes that families in the community will meet Park Street families during the open gym time and eventually will be drawn into the church through those relationships.

⁸³ Park Street obtained permission from the donor to apply the money to the day care program

⁸⁴ www.parkstreet.org

PSC is also planning to expand the support it offers to local families by offering an after-school program that will offer a variety of extra-curricular/enrichment activities for grades one through six from 3:15 to 5:30 p.m., which PSC hopes will be available by next year. Kris Perkins also hopes to develop a program that serves the needs of the elderly residents in Beacon Hill. Park Street Church's hope is that the support and space that its efforts provides local families will strengthen the families, encourage them to stay in the community, and hopefully attend PSC as members one day.

Personnel

Park Street Church believes that it is critical for the people who staff their ministries to be Christian. When Kris thinks about the programs that Park Street Church offers the community, he is guided by the question, "how are we as a church to be involved in the community so that the goal of evangelism is realized?" In order for that goal of evangelism to be realized, he believes that the staff and volunteers who interact with the community must be Christians because the love of Christ and the witness of Christ through their actions is what is going to win people over to Christ or make people curious about Christianity. This is particularly important because most of Park Streets ministries are designed to meet people's perceived or "felt need" and the "religious" components are usually optional or subtle. The expectation is that conversations about Christ or the opportunities to share the gospel will come from trusting relationships that are developed over time. As a result, all the of Park Street Kids' staff are Christian, and 9 out of the 11 of them are Park Street Church members. Although it is not required, Park Street's goal or hope is that members of Park Street Church will staff all of its programs, including the elementary school that has yet to open. PSC is also emphatic about having the boards of both schools fully controlled by Christians. Currently, all of the board members are members of Park Street Church.

The fact that PSC and Park Street Kids require that their staff and board members be Christian does not mean that they compromise the professional qualifications of their staff. All of the teachers at Park Street Kids are credentialed teachers, many of whom have previous teaching experience. The boards members of Park Street Kids and Park Street School⁸⁵ have significant professional and educational experience. The 15 member board includes 2 lawyers, 1 board member with 4 different teaching certifications, a teacher and director of another Christian academy in Boston, one person who holds several graduate degrees including one in Christian education, the co-founder and director of a special education school for the deaf, a woman who worked as a policy analyst for agency in charge of Massachusetts charter schools, an instructor in the Department of Pediatrics at Boston University Medical

⁸⁵ Park Street Kids and Park Street School will share the same board.

School who holds multiple degrees related to child health, several people with MBA's or significant experience with financial analysis, and other people who have decades of experience as trustees on other boards.

However, the hiring practices PSC's partners do not necessarily have as restrictive hiring practices. Park Street requires that its partners in ministry or organizations it financially supports agree with Park Street Church's Statement of Faith, but it does not check the details of how an organization is run or its hiring practices. Park Street's leadership relies on its faith in the organization, which is based on the organization's statement of faith and trust in the organization's leaders. For example, BRM's hiring requirements are not as stringent as PSC's. BRM receives up to 45% of its funding from the federal government and does not have any policies against hiring homosexuals.

PSC has intentionally adopted an "organic" way of managing the leaders of its own ministries and the people who serve as liaisons to its ministry partners. Dr. Harrell described PSC's style as "organic" to contrast it with a business model or a style that relies on a formal organizational structure to provide oversight. When CityWorks ministries began, PSC did have a committee to oversee the ministries and provide a structure of accountability. However, PSC decided to disband the committee because the leadership felt that a "business" model did not fit PSC's style. Instead, the leadership decided to have an organic style of management in which a Park Street staff person or elder works individually with ministry heads, communicating needs and concerns during personal meetings, and building accountability through a friendship-like relationship. According to Dr. Harrell, this relational accountability works for PSC because Park Street's leadership feels that it can trust the people responsible for each ministry because "they are all part of the body of Christ: they share the same faith and value system."

Although PSC firmly believes in the importance of having the staff and volunteers of its ministries being Christian, non-Christians are permitted to participate in some of PSC's ministries if their involvement does not compromise the ministry and if the ministry leader feels that it could be a good way to share the gospel with the non-Christian volunteer. Some people have become more interested in Christianity after serving in a ministry. Dr. Harrell feels that the situation is similar to when non-Christians ask if they can attend church services on Sunday. He said, "Of course they can come to service. We want them to come. But they can't be deacons." Similarly, Dr. Harrell is comfortable with allowing non-Christians to volunteer in some of its ministries such as the tutoring program in which volunteers help students with their schoolwork for 1 ½ hours a week and there is not necessarily a consistent relationship between the volunteer and student. However, he would not allow a non-Christian to teach in PSC's FOCUS program because the teachers of ESL programs have contact with students at least 6 hours a week for an extended period of time, and PSC wants services that lead to those kinds of

relationships to be provided by a Christian. Because of the nature of the relationship between the students and the teachers of the ESL portion of FOCUS, Dr. Harrell would expect the teachers of FOCUS's ESL courses to meet the same requirements as Bible study teachers.

Partnerships

While PSC considers proposals for partnerships on a case by case basis, it does have some very clear guidelines that will predict with whom Park Street will or will not partner. Although PSC is a fairly wealthy church, it recognizes that it only has so much money and feels it must be wise about how it spends money. PSC's leaders believe that their efforts will not end poverty or human suffering. As a result, they decided that the money entrusted to PSC by its congregants should follow its congregants. In order for Dr. Harrell or the Missions Committee to consider a request for funding or permission to solicit for volunteers among church members, the organization must have a Park Street member who is already involved in the organization. This is why the church has defined a CityWorks Partnership as "any city-based, evangelistic or social service agency where volunteers enlist to serve through a Park Street liaison (a person intimately involved with the particular agency.)"

The leadership then considers the mission and theological beliefs of the organization. They are looking for organizations that are "on the same page" and the church usually will not sponsor organizations that are not explicitly Christian. The partnering organization has to agree with PSC's Statement of Faith and if the organization is a good fit, PSC will approve the partnership. However, PSC sees its relationship as one that is with the congregation member who is either working at the organization or volunteering there and not as a relationship with the organization. Once the Park Street member leaves organization, the church withdraws its funding and support.

One exception to these general guidelines are organizations with whom Park Street Church has had long-standing relationships for many years. Park Street Church supports the Boston Rescue Ministry, the only Protestant homeless shelter in the greater Boston area, and Emmanuel Gospel Center, a Christian intermediary organization in Boston that focuses on meeting the needs of urban churches and helping them meet the needs in their communities, regardless of the involvement of Park Street congregants in their ministries. Although the church's support for these two organizations comes from the leadership's commitment to support these two organizations, even these relationships are somewhat dependent on the people in that ministry.

PSC's support for BRM is based on the trust that its leaders have in BRM's Executive Director who they know shares the same beliefs and values as Park Street and who they believe is trustworthy. As Dr. Harrell stated, "I don't know if we would continue to support the Boston Rescue Mission if it wasn't

for John Samaan [Boston Rescue Mission's Executive Director] but we will support it as long as John is there." However, PSC's ties to BRM run deeper than its relationship with the director of BRM: one of PSC's elders is on the board of BRM, its Church Administrator is a former BRM board member, at least one of BRM's staff is a member of PSC, and as Matt Prichard put it, "Park Street Church and Boston Rescue Mission have had a relationship for 100 years." Nevertheless, if PSC feels that the values of these organizations are no longer in line with those of PSC or that the leadership of these organizations cannot be trusted, PSC will withdraw its support.

The other exceptions are ministries that Park Street has decided to support regardless of the involvement of PSC congregations. If these programs are run by PSC, then the church will pay to professionally staff them. If the ministry is a partnership with another organization, then PSC usually funds the salary of a local staff person for the organization. The only ministries that PSC supports in this way are campus ministries such as Campus Crusade for Christ, ISI, Intervarsity Christian Fellowship. PSC considers partnerships with these organizations a good fit for several reasons. They share the same theological beliefs as PSC and the work these organizations do is directly aligned with PSC's decision in the 1950's to engage in campus ministry. Finally, PSC sees Boston as a place with a lot of university students, many of whom make up a significant proportion of its own congregation. Despite PSC's commitment to campus ministries these partnerships are not set in stone. PSC's commitment to university ministry might change if the demographics of its congregations drastically changed and if students were no longer such a large portion of Boston's population.

Partnerships are, however, an important way in which PSC seeks to meet the needs of people in the broader community for two reasons. Partnerships are important to PSC because the church does not feel that it is equipped to provide high quality services in many areas. For example, PSC would like to do something to help the homeless people in Boston Common and downtown Boston; however, PSC does not have any expertise in providing services to the homeless. Since that there are other Christian organizations that share PSC's theological beliefs such as BRM and Starlight Ministries which already target downtown Boston and have staff with specialized knowledge and expertise, PSC decided that was wiser to support these organizations than to try to provide similar services on its own.

Another reason PSC relies so heavily on partnerships is that it feels that it enables the church to respond to what God is calling PSC to do. PSC's urban ministries are not carefully planned. The leadership, instead, relies on the Holy Spirit to move in the hearts of people in the congregation to lead the church to support ministries according to God's will and purpose. As a result, to an onlooker it may appear as if the church goes through phases, but it is just relying on God to lead His people. That is another reason why the church withdraws support from an organization if a Park Street member is no

longer involved in the organization. PSC considers that an indication from God that it is time for the church to move on to a different ministry.

PSC is very careful when it works with organizations that do not share the same theological beliefs because PSC does not want to compromise its beliefs and values. PSC cares a lot about organizations' motivations for pursuing a certain activity even though PSC and the organization might agree on the benefits or value of the activity. Dr. Harrell referred to it as a "suspicion of human motivation". PSC does not want to partner with organizations or people who are promoting an activity out for selfish reasons, nor does PSC want to partner with organizations that are motivated by their belief in other gods. For example, PSC would be happy to work with other organizations to encourage recycling; however, PSC would not work with an organization that was promoting recycling because it was motivated by its worship of the Mother Earth.

PSC has, however, collaborated with some non-Christian organizations in limited ways. The Church has agreed to be a site on the Freedom Trail, Alcoholic Anonymous meets at Park Street, and make its restroom facilities available to people who participate in First Night events. But there are limitations to these relationships because PSC wants its activities to be intentionally Christian. Park Street's limited involvement with First Night exemplifies how Park Street church is willing to be friendly with secular organizations without actually partnering with them. Because of its central location in downtown Boston, its proximity to the Boston Common, and its location on the Freedom Trail, Park Street Church the organizers of First Night asked PSC to participate in the event. However, PSC did not want to be just another venue: the leadership of the church wanted the event in PSC to be explicitly Christian and First Night was not interested in a Christian event. Because PSC wanted to convey that it was willing to work with the community, PSC agreed to allow event goers to use its restroom facilities and hold its New Year's events concurrently with First Night events so that they would function like a First Night activity, without being on the official program.

Park Street Church has also partnered with secular organizations for practical reasons as long as the relationship does not require PSC to compromise its values. One example is PSC's relationship with Traveler's Aid, a secular organization that helps people who are stranded due to lack of money get back home. Because of PSC's central location, many people would approach the church and ask for traveling money to get home. Initially, PSC did give some people money to pay for the trip, but found that many of these people had lied to the church and were still hanging around the Boston Common or the streets of downtown Boston. Seeing it as an issue of stewardship, Park Street Church partnered with Traveler's Aid, who has the staff and know-how to check the background of each person who approaches PSC for

traveling money and verify whether the person is telling the truth. Once a person's story have been verified, Traveler's Aid contacts PSC usually offers to pay a certain percentage of the person's traveling expenses and asks PSC to pay the remaining portion, which it usually does.

Park Street Church's position on accepting or partnering with government agencies or secular agencies is less clear. The church does not an explicit policy on accepting government funds and has never pursued public funding. Dr. Harrell is not in favor of faith-based funding from the government because of a general fear of the strings that will be attached to the money and because he feels that is better to keep the lines between church and state clear. However, Kris Perkins seemed to welcome partnering with the government or receiving funding from the government as long as the government did not restrict them from sharing the gospel. Nevertheless, both pastors prefer to obtain funding from private sources if possible.

Place

The question of place is very difficult for Park Street Church. On the one hand the leadership feels that the church has a responsibility to the neighborhood closest to it. Park Street Church believes that evangelism happens through non-Christians' relationships with churches and members of the church. In order to attract people to church, the church and its members need to be involved in the community in loving ways. Kris Perkins believes that the first group of people that the church has the opportunity to impact and should impact is the people who live in the immediate vicinity of the church, regardless of their income. He said, "Every community and families have needs regardless of income You don't have to go far off into another community to help the poor. It's good to help the poor, but that doesn't mean you should not help the people in your neighborhood."

It is this kind of thinking that led the church to start Park Street Kids and Park Street School. The residents of Beacon Hill/Back Bay are not poor and serving the residents, particularly the families in this community, required the church to find a program or service that better targeted these residents. When it learned that the greatest needs families in Beacon Hill had were for educational services, a place for families and children to play, and more support for families the church moved to start a pre-school and opened up its gym to the broader community.

Although, Park Street Church has a vision and desire to help and serve the people living in close proximity to the church, providing services that meet the needs of its congregation or supporting the community outreach efforts that interest its congregation members is also an important goal that often pushes the church to focus on activities that are spread throughout Boston. Park Street Church's congregants and staff come from neighborhoods and university campuses spread throughout the greater

Boston area. According Dr. Harrell, the communities along the Red and Green T lines are all part of Park Street's community because that is where its congregants and staff live. According to Kris, the church's staff and congregation members tend to focus on the needs in their respective communities and not necessarily the one in which the church is located. PSC's model of partnering only with organizations in which its congregants are involved reinforces the tendency to support ministries throughout the greater Boston area.

Having such a large number of university and college students in its congregation also makes it more difficult for Park Street Church to focus on its immediate community. Unlike more stable churches that concentrate on strengthening the faith and sense of community among its congregation before it launches broader community outreach or service programs, the transient nature of Park Street's congregation makes it difficult for the congregation to ever reach that state. Half of Park Street's congregation turns over every three years. The church is constantly working to help these college and university students mature in their faith and develop as Christians so that they can be prepared to do ministry and impact their communities wherever they end up settling after they leave college. Although this focus was not an intentional decision by Park Street's leaders, this is the role it has evolved into in response to the needs of its congregation. This has led to the development of what Dr. Harrell called the "myth of Park Street" which Dr. Harrell defined the myth that Park Street has historically bolstered the faith of people who are highly educated, who then go out and do ministry and exercise their influence in other parts of the country and do incredible things for the Lord. PSC has only recently recognized and officially accepted that this is the role that God wants Park Street to play at this time and now considers itself a "university church" even though the church itself is not an a college campus or associated with a particular university.

Finally, the higher socio-economic level of Back Bay/Beacon Hill residents also pushes Park Street Church to provide services that are outside of Beacon Hill. The church does feel strongly about helping the underprivileged and providing for the practical as well as spiritual needs of the disadvantaged. As a result, the church supports organizations or the efforts of evangelical churches in lower income communities such as Chelsea and when the CityWorks Tutoring Program first began it tried to provide tutoring services in Boston's lower income neighborhoods such as Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, and Dorchester.

People

Kris said, "While many organizations spend time focusing on their mission statement and who they are, the question for Park Street Church has never been who we are, but who does Christ want us to

be.” As a result, PSC’s activity in the community is driven by the words in Jesus Christ’s prayer the night before he was crucified:

²⁰“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. ²⁴“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. *New International Version John 17:21-24*

The leadership focuses particularly on Christ’s call for the unity of believers and the importance of loving one another so that unbelievers may come to know Christ. As a result, Kris Perkins believes that Park Street and all evangelical churches always have a concern for the soul because they care for the whole person. Distinguishing the perspective of PSC from the Fundamentalists who he feels completely avoid social ministry or urban ministry, and liberal churches that think their call is to meet the needs of people to decrease their suffering, Kris said, “For evangelicals, we can’t just give food. We can’t just give a school. Evangelicals’ view of being involved in the world is to use their involvement as a context to share the gospel. People have a need in their souls and we can provide the answer. We don’t wait for the hunger to pass to share Jesus.”

However, PSC does not consider being involved in the community an excuse for evangelism. The church and its members really want people in the community to be better; it’s just that they believe people need to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior to be healed and made whole. Kris believes that this happens, “When the community identifies a need that it just doesn’t know how the need will be met and the church meets the need” because he feels that that kind of ministry is most like God’s love. He said, “That is what God does for us – he meets our real physical need, really loves us, sacrificed himself to meet our real needs out of love – that’s what Christ does” and that is what PSC is trying to do for the community.

In addition to striving to provide all the children in their schools an excellent academic education, PSC is equally concerned about developing a Christian world view, helping each child to achieve his or her potential, and to develop an understanding of his or her worth as a unique being created by God. Park Street’s desire to nurture the growth of the whole child, makes it necessary for it to also to focus on the children’s spiritual needs. This is why Park Street Kids’ curriculum includes prayer before lunch, monthly themes about God or Jesus’ attributes, and emphasized Christian values. Park Street School will hold Chapel once a month, which will be led by one of Park Street Church’s ministers. Park Street Kids’

staff actively promote church activities. However, PSC still emphasizes relational evangelism as a way to bring children and their parents to faith in Jesus.

Politics

Although PSC is literally a few steps away from the Massachusetts State House, PSC's physical proximity is its only relationship to politicians and the government. PSC is extremely cautious about taking positions on policy issues, supporting political candidates, or political parties for several reasons. Although the leadership may have its own opinions on public policy issues or have a political party affiliation the pastoral staff are careful to keep each other accountable in keeping their opinions private. The pastors do not want its congregation members to think that they have to be a Republican or a Democrat in order to be a Christian just because that is the party with which the pastor is affiliated. Similarly, the pastoral staff do not want anyone to get the mistaken idea that anyone who is a real Christian should take a certain position on a public policy issue.

The only times PSC's leadership feel comfortable making a statement on issues are issues which PSC's leadership feel the Bible provides clear direction. Issues such as abortion, homosexuality, pre-marital sex are examples of such issues. However, if the Bible does not give what PSC's leadership considers indisputable direction on an issue PSC is unwilling to make a public statement or make a statement on the pulpit regarding the issue. PSC has a large, diverse, congregation and the leadership has found that it is difficult to find issues on which there is a unified voice within the congregation on public policy issues.

The church intentionally keeps its distance from politics and politicians because it does not want any politician to get the impression that the church is on the side of a particular party or politician by lobbying for or against a particular position. PSC does not ask for favors, regardless of the cause, because it does not want to be beholden to the government. Dr. Harrell feels that the church's lack of political activity has enabled the church to get approval for its plans to develop the Park Street School Site. Because the church had not taken sides with any political party or politician in the past, no one had any personal reasons to object to the church's activities in the community. Another reason for Park Street's reluctance to form partnerships with the government because Park Street leadership feels that the separation between church and state is what has allowed religious organizations to thrive in the United States, and that the acceptance of funds from the government regardless of the strings or lack thereof would lead to increased interference or unwanted influence from the government.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS ACROSS THE CASES

In telling the stories of how and why CLJ, FCC, and PSC are providing services to their surrounding communities it becomes clear that their activity in the community cannot be separated from their theological beliefs. As a result, those who seek to work with evangelical churches must gain an understanding of the nature of these beliefs. Evangelical churches' work in the community is a form of evangelism and an expression of their faith in Jesus Christ. The case studies show that PSC, FCC, and CLJ reach out to people outside their church by providing services to the community hoping that the recipients, seeing the love these churches are showing through the services and the people who are administering the services, will be drawn to Jesus Christ:

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.⁸⁶

Although the primary goal is to show love by meeting people's physical needs, the hope is that the "fruit" or impact of their generosity and interactions with the people they serve will result in opportunities to meet peoples' spiritual needs. PSC, FCC, and CLJ believe that it is critical to meet people's spiritual needs to truly help them. As a result, the ways in which these churches design and administer their services are deeply influenced by their theological beliefs and values.

Programs

The main factors that determine what services FCC's, PSC, and CLJ's will provide for the community are the ability to demonstrate Christ's love to people outside the church by filling in a gap in neighborhood services, the movement of the Holy Spirit, and reliance on the sovereignty of God. The stories of how the programs at FCC, PSC, and CLJ developed show that one factor sometimes outweighs the other factors; however, all three factors are always involved in the decision-making and implementation process.

While some of services FCC, PSC, and CLJ's provide to the community are ones that are typically associated with churches such as food pantries, programs for the homeless, and day care, the services these churches choose to run in-house are often services tailored to meet needs that are specific

⁸⁶ NIV: 2 Corinthians 9: 12-13

to their community. FCC, PSC, and CLJ are not committed to providing certain types of services or programs because they value a particular service more than others. Their theological beliefs drive PSC and FCC, in particular, to meet needs that are not being filled by anyone else in the community. They believe that filling a gap in services or meeting a need that the community could not otherwise meet best communicates the love of Christ. As Kris Perkins of PSC put it, “That’s what Christ does for us,” and that is what these churches seek to do for the community. This is what motivates, FCC to run a ministry to the homeless whenever homeless families are placed in Revere’s motels and PSC to operate private Christian schools. CLJ operates a higher education resource center because it provides a sorely needed service to the Latino community. Although a higher education resource center would most likely have been provided by another FBO if CLJ had not submitted an application and been selected by The Nellie Mae Foundation, CLJ felt that it was uniquely positioned to run the center and meet the needs of Latino youth in Boston

The churches’ belief in the power of the Holy Spirit and the sovereignty of God play critical roles in how all three churches decide on which services the church will operate and which ones it will support. CLJ, FCC, PSC believe that the Holy Spirit moves in people’s hearts to lead them towards certain decisions or certain actions to fulfill God’s will, teaches and reminds Christians about God’s word, gives individuals “spiritual gifts” specifically to serve other people, and gives them strength and wisdom beyond their own ability. For this reason, CLJ, FCC, and PSC rely on God to give them direction through the Holy Spirit regarding what services they should provide. The leadership in all three churches believe the church’s role is to recognize when God is working and to then obediently respond. The leaders wait for God’s leading and when they feel that God is leading them to do something then they pursue it with confidence. However, there is some variance in how each church actually “relies” on the Holy Spirit to determine what services it will provide.

CLJ’s approach most differs from the other two churches’. CLJ believes that it has received a specific calling from God to share God’s love with Boston by administering “acts of mercy” through services to the community. Based on this calling, the leadership of the church prays for direction on what services God wants it to provide to the community. When CLJ is approached with certain opportunities or ideas that are in-line with the broad vision that God provided it, and does not compromise its theological beliefs and values the leadership considers it the working of the Holy Spirit. If the resources CLJ needs to carry out the program “fall in place” it perceives it as confirmation that God wanted CLJ to pursue the program.

The majority of the programs PSC and FCC provide are based on the movement of the Holy Spirit in what seems like a more “grass-roots” approach. The leadership of these two churches wait for the Holy Spirit to put a “burden” or interest in the hearts of people in their congregation for a particular activity or

ministry. If the interest is sustained and the people with that particular interest have the spiritual gifts to carry out that activity the leadership interprets it as an indication that God wants them to pursue the ministry. As long as God continues to fuel that interest in the members of the congregation and provide for the logistics of the program, the churches believe that the program continues to be in His will and they continue the program.

The case studies on FCC and PSC's show that these churches' reliance on the Holy Spirit and their desire to do God's will lead them to be flexible about the services they offer. Although they do not start a program with the goal of discontinuing the service, there is an openness to the idea that they may not provide the service forever and that God might call them to do something different in the future. While there is certainly some emotional attachment to the service among the people who run it they all seem to recognize that they will stop providing the service when God tells them its time. This is why FCC ended the day care program it operated for 20 years and eventually began operating a food bank in its place.

However, there is a range in the "intentionality" of the services that these three churches provide to the community. Both FCC and CLJ are committed to always provide some form of service to the community, but they wait for God's leading with regards to the kind of service they should provide. However, PSC, is comfortable with periods of activity and inactivity in providing services to the community because they believe that a lack of interest among congregants is simply an indication that God wants the church to focus on other types of activities.

CLJ, PSC, and FCC's belief in the sovereignty of God enable them to take-on a considerable amount of risk to provide services to the community. These churches believe that if the Holy Spirit has led them to start a particular program, it is God's will for the church. If it is God's will for the church to provide the service they believe that God in His sovereignty will provide. As a result, CLJ, PSC, and FCC have in faith pursued new programs or services without knowing exactly where the funding or capacity to provide the service would come from: CLJ purchased a building they believed God was calling them to buy knowing nothing more than the fact that the building would one day be used to serve the community; FCC pursued opening a day care center knowing that they could only afford to pay a teacher \$30 a month and little else; PSC entered into a purchase and sale agreement for a school building knowing that it will need \$12 million to purchase and open the school with only bridge financing for the acquisition in place. Although none of the churches actually start the program or service until what they believe the basic necessities are in place, they firmly believe that the programs they finally decide to pursue are God's program and they confidently move forward in faith, taking concrete steps towards implementation, including taking on financial risks.

Their reliance on God's sovereignty is also what enables these churches to turn down or avoid sources of funding and partnerships that they believe will cause them to compromise their values or the vision that God has given them. These churches are pursuing these particular services in obedience to God's leading and compromising their religious values or vision to implement a service or program off the ground is not part of God's will. Even if the funding or partnership would bring them closer to actually implementing or starting the service, they will wait for a source of financing that better fits their vision and values.

Partnerships

CLJ's, FCC's, and PSC's theological beliefs and desire to maintain their identity as Christian organizations restrict their willingness to work with organizations that do not share the same values. Although there is a wide range in how these values play out in each of the case studies, there is agreement that if entering into a partnership prevents the churches and their staff from sharing the gospel, mentioning Jesus, or offering to pray with someone if an appropriate opportunity arises, then they will not partner with the organization. There is also agreement that they will not enter into a partnership if it would reduce the churches' ability to control the hiring requirements for their programs, particularly with regards to staff's theological beliefs and values.

It is important to note that agreement on a desired outcome is not enough to motivate any of these churches to participate in a partnership or collaborative effort. It is equally important to CLJ, PSC, or FCC that the methods used, which includes attitude, and the motivations behind other organizations' participation in the collaborative do not conflict with their theological beliefs and values. FCC did not collaborate with the Circle of Friends because it did not agree with the Rev. Granitsas referred to as "cynicism" that several organizations represented at the Circle of Friends brought the table. He and the other members of FCC interested in providing services to homeless people felt that some of the organizations were being too judgemental and lacked compassion. FCC believed that it was wrong to give people the third degree as if it was the government.

CLJ ended its relationship with GBIO because of the group's disrespectful attitude towards the government, which they believe is unbiblical. PSC does not partner with organizations that view their participation in the collaborative effort an act of worship to other gods. For example, PSC might be willing to partner with organizations to promote recycling in the community; however, they will not partner with an organization that promotes recycling because it believes that the earth is something to be worshipped. None of these churches partner with organizations that actively promote values contrary to their own beliefs.

There is also a desire to do something that is distinctly “Christian” which also complicates partnerships. While PSC, FCC, and CLJ do not “shove the gospel” down people’s throats, and the services they provide to the community consist mostly of non-religious activities, all their programs incorporate some level of Christian activity such as prayer before meals, quietly handing out religious tracts, or providing Christian mentors or tutors to youth who offer to pray with the students about a situation with which they are struggling or a test they are about to take. This kind of theological input can often make partnering difficult. PSC, FCC, CLJ do not partner with organizations that do not allow them to provide any kind of distinctly Christian programming and organizations or coalitions that do not want distinctly Christian programming incorporated into their efforts in any way do not partner with or support services provided by PSC, FCC, or CLJ.

However, all three churches are willing to collaborate with secular and non-evangelical organizations if certain conditions are met. The deciding factors are whether they feel that there are shared goals, a value added by the secular organization, and nothing that requires the churches to compromise its theological values or its vision. For example, PSC works with Traveler’s Aid to help people who approach the church for money because the relationship enables PSC to help people in need while being good stewards of the financial resources entrusted to it. FCC partners with the U.S. Postal Service to collect food for its food pantry because the partnership enables it to serve hundreds of hungry people without compromising any of its values. CLJ partners with Let’s Get Ready to provide high quality college preparatory courses to youth as long as Let’s Get Ready’s involvement with the youth is limited to direct service provision -- teaching the courses.

None of these relationships are partnerships in which both organizations have equal control over programmatic decisions. In all cases, the churches are either running the program and have full control over programmatic decisions or they have the option not to “go-along” with the decision of the partnering organization. In all of these situations, the services provided by the church are in no way dictated by the decision of a larger decision-making group or dependent upon the approval of another organization.

Personnel

All three churches are adamant about having full control over the hiring requirements of the people who staff or volunteer to assist with the services they provide. They all require that staff and volunteers be Christians who share the same values and beliefs as the church. It is clear that any source of funding or partnership that would limit their control over the hiring process would not be acceptable.

While the services they are providing such as handing out food or helping students with math problems seem non-religious, it is a priority for all three churches that people who receive services

from them will notice that the service is better because of the way they are treated, and the love they receive from the staff. CLJ, PSC, and FCC want people to recognize that Jesus Christ is the reason for the difference and ultimately become interested in Jesus Christ as a result of this “difference” they observe and experience. This is why all three churches feel so strongly about the importance of having Christian staff who not only imitate the character of Jesus Christ but are capable of nurturing that interest.

The faith of their staff, volunteers, and leaders in organizations with which they support is what enables FCC, CLJ, and FCC to hand-off so much responsibility. The church leaders are comfortable putting trust and faith in people who they know are fellow Christians whom they believe are being led by the Holy Spirit because they trust that the Holy Spirit will continue to teach and guide them to follow God’s will. Philippians 2:13-teaches “¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” Consequently, they feel comfortable handing over significant responsibility with little supervision.

Although all three churches have very strong feelings about requiring that staff or volunteers be Christian, they do sometimes allow non-Christians to volunteer to work in their programs. The choice is partially based on practicality such as their need for more volunteers or the skills that the volunteers have to offer and is partially influenced by the possibility that allowing the non-Christians to volunteer could be an opportunity to evangelize to the volunteers. However, all three churches limit the involvement of non-Christian volunteers to activities or tasks that provide direct services. For example, FCC allows non-Christians to participate at the food pantry, PSC allows non-Christians to volunteer in its tutoring program, and CLJ allows the Harvard students to teach college preparatory course. All positions that would involve sustained and repeated contact with the same individual or are highly likely lead to the development of a strong relationship such as mentoring relationship must be filled by a Christian. As Dr. Harrell of PSC put it, people in those types of positions would be expected to meet the qualifications of a Bible study teacher.

However, there seems to be a difference between the way these churches view partnerships in which the church and an outside organization work together to provide a joint service and partnerships in which the church participates to influence the work of other organizations. Although all three churches will not allow other organizations to have a decision-making role over the services they provide or the activities of the church, there is a range of the level of participation by CLJ, FCC, and PSC in committees or boards other non-evangelical organizations: the one of CLJ is on the board of Nuestra Comunidad, a community development corporation, and is an active participant on United Way’s Faith-In-Action Committee; the pastor of FCC chaired the Human Rights Commission; and the pastoral staff PSC do not participate in other organizations as representatives of the church .

Place

Place is not a clear-cut issue for any of the churches. Their congregations come from such a wide geographic area and the motivation behind the services the churches provide or support is social evangelism, which does not lend itself to drawing geographical boundaries or “service areas”. All three churches have at least two concepts of their geographical community or service area. They all consider the neighborhood in which the physical church building is located and the geographical areas in which a large portion of their congregational members live to be their service areas. In the case of FCC, the two concepts refer to the same geographical area which is the City of Revere. Because CLJ is also an ethnic church, it has a third community --the Latino community- which is spread throughout the Boston region.

Many of the services that FCC, PSC, and CLJ provide or support were started with a certain geographic area in mind. FCC started a food kitchen for the people of Revere, PSC started private Christian Schools with the Beacon Hill/Back Bay neighborhoods in mind, and CLJ started HERC with the Hispanic community which includes Roxbury and Dorchester in mind. While those services do help people in their “target areas” they also serve people who are from neighborhoods outside the “target area”. Location of residence is never a criteria for receiving services or help from these churches. As a result, although FCC’s food pantry mostly serves people who live in Revere, people also come from Chelsea, Lynn, and Cambridge and FCC does not have any problems serving them. PSC’s partnership with Traveler’s Aid is another example of how these churches do not draw geographical boundaries on who they will help.

The goal of evangelism also leads these churches to support missionaries who are scattered throughout the country and are mostly overseas. All of the churches support missionaries who provide services and ministry to people outside their local neighborhood, the neighborhoods in which their congregants live, and the people who literally walk up to these churches’ doorstep asking for help.

People

FCC, CLJ, and PSC’s desire to show Christ’s love and goal of evangelism motivate them to serve a wide range of people through their services. Although the Bible exhorts believers to pay special attention to the poor, disadvantaged, and the lonely, the Bible also teaches that the message of salvation is for everyone. Since they believe that all people need Jesus, there is no reason for them to limit whom they serve. FCC, PSC, and CLJ are interested in reaching out to people in their community who can consist of people who are young, elderly, low-income, upper-income, of different faiths, or different ethnicities. They recognize that the poor are not the only people who have needs or problems and that

reaching out to the people in their communities could require a mixture of very different kinds of programs. That is why FCC does not experience any organizational conflict in having a program that distributes free food to the homeless and providing a free special dinner for seniors regardless of their income. That is why PSC provides a pre-school program that serves mostly wealthy families and provide significant financial support for an evangelical Christian organization that serves the homeless. These venues provide opportunities for the church to share Christ's love and message of salvation, and that is what matters.

It is important to note that all three churches believe that it is wrong to discriminate against people they serve based on their faith. Although they are selective about their staff and volunteers, FCC, CLJ, and PSC welcome people of other faiths because of moral issues and because of their evangelistic goals. In fact, all three of these churches find it very exciting that their services bring in people to the church and allow them to minister to people who normally would avoid the church.

Religious Content

All the services provided by all three churches include a mild to moderate level of religious content in all of the programs they offer. FCC, PSC, and PSC do not believe in shoving the gospel down people's throats, but they will incorporate teaching about Jesus and Christianity in some way – tracts, lessons, through relationships, through music, skits, optional religious events tied to their program, invitations to church events. All three churches make it clear to the people they serve that the services are being provided by a church.

Although many people feel uncomfortable with having sectarian FBOs like evangelical churches provide services to the community because they think evangelicals and will pressure beneficiaries or manipulate them into conversion, the fact is that evangelicals believe that it is absolutely wrong to coerce or trick someone into conversion. Not only is it against their integrity, but their preferred style of evangelism is modeled on the life of Jesus and the instructions of the Bible which encourage them to evangelize by loving people and taking care of people's immediate perceived need. The Bible instructs Christians to be gentle and respectful when they evangelize, 1 Peter 3: 13-16: ¹⁵But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." Just as the passage instructs, PSC, CLJ, and FCC provide people services so that when people ask them why they are helping or why they are so loving their staff can respond by sharing the gospel in a way that no one can find fault with them.

It is critical to understand that PSC, FCC, CLJ are seeking to introduce people in their community to Jesus Christ out of their sincere love and desire to really help people. They honestly believe that what people need most is to have Jesus Christ in their lives and that a personal relationship with Jesus is what will meet the needs deep within people's hearts and souls. They believe that people who are struggling with addictions, harmful lifestyles, can be healed and freed from their "old ways" or "sins" when they accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and understand His love for them. They also believe that knowing Jesus Christ can address people's emptiness, loneliness, and hopelessness. As a result, they offer people in the community services because many people are not prepared to hear the gospel or ready to deal with deeper spiritual issues until their immediate needs are met.

Politics

Many people often interpret evangelical churches' failure to participate in traditional political activism or unwillingness to speak loudly against public policy as cowardice, lack of prophetic voice, or indifference. However, the case studies show that that is not an accurate understanding of why evangelical churches do not get involved. While of PSC, FCC, CLJ's organizational decisions are influenced by their churches' context, their position on the relationship of their church to political activism is not. Their uniform position is almost solely influenced by their theological beliefs. True to their evangelical heritage, all three churches take a strict interpretation of the Bible, which they believe does not encourage churches to become politically active.

In their efforts to uphold the teachings of the Bible --nothing more and nothing less --it difficult or undesirable for evangelical churches to get involved in traditional political activism. The only time evangelical churches are willing to take a position on a public policy issue or regulation or become politically active is when it is a "black or white" issue which is clearly addressed by the Bible. If the Bible does not clear direction and the congregation members do not agree on a particular issue, these churches feel that they cannot take a position as a church. The pastors of the church avoid taking positions on debatable issues or policies, politicians, and political parties because they do not want people to get the impression that taking a certain position is required to be Christian or equate Christianity with a certain political party of position on a public policy issue.

However, even if FCC, CLJ, PSC have a strong opinion on an issue, it is still not likely that they will participate in traditional political activism such as protesting against the government or taking a demeanor of demanding things from the government. They believe that it disrespects the government and would require the church to disregard the clear instruction of the Bible which in Romans 13:1-6 instructs Christians to submit and respect the authority of the government: "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. . . Consequently, he

who rebels against the authority rebels against what God has instituted. . . Then do what is right and he will commend you.” Disregarding the clear instruction of the Bible to pursue man’s agenda tend towards liberalism which is another extreme that evangelical churches are careful to avoid. They are more likely to preach the biblical principles are that relevant to a certain issue in a sermon and exhort their congregation members to act on their personal convictions based on those Biblical principles.

Despite this strong position against the political activism, there are times in which the churches do feel it is appropriate for the church to challenge the government. FCC challenged the government when the church felt the City of Revere and the school district were, without question, discriminating against the Asian immigrants their community. In addition, CLJ has not ruled public political activism out; however, it has yet to encounter an issue or situation in which it feels it is appropriate for the church to pursue traditional forms of political activism. All three churches would agree that Christian churches’ public opposition to slavery and support for the civil rights movement were appropriate. Another interesting twist is that none of these churches discourage their congregation members from participating in public demonstrations or political advocacy. In fact, it seems that the churches are proud of their members who have advocated for issues or and values based on the personal convictions which are grounded in Biblical principles such as family values and pro-life policies.

Another significant reason why FCC, PSC, and CLJ for the most part, do not pursue political activism, is because of their shared perspective on the primary role of their church. All of the churches agreed that political activism is not the primary role of their church and believe that it should not spend a considerable amount of its resources on such activities. They all feel that their primary role is to teach people about Jesus, disciple people, and encourage people to live lives in accordance with Biblical teaching.

In addition, all three churches are partially motivated by the idea that the church needs to stay above the fray of politics in order to maintain its moral authority. However, FCC, CLJ, and PSC all support the work of evangelical organizations that focused on advocating issues, values, and sometimes legislation that are in alignment with evangelical churches’ values such as Focus on the Family and A Women’s Concern.

Conclusion

If generalizations can be made about evangelical churches based on the three case studies, I believe that evangelical churches can be a tremendous asset to urban communities if community organizations can learn to harness evangelical churches’ genuine desire to help people in their community. Evangelical churches can provide a “package” of benefits to communities that are difficult to find in most community organizations. They offer communities flexibility in almost every aspect of

programming, sincere intention to provide high quality services, and willingness to take-on considerable risks in order to meet the needs of the community. Because filling in gaps in neighborhood services furthers evangelical churches' evangelistic goals and because they believe that avoiding duplication of services is a form of good stewardship, communities can gain a lot by helping evangelical churches meet their own objectives.

The case studies show that evangelical churches possess an extraordinary amount of flexibility in what they do in and for people in their community. Because they are a church and not a single-purpose service agency, a community development corporation established to serve a particular geographic area, or have a mission statement defining a narrow target population, evangelical churches are open to providing a wide variety of services to an unlimited spectrum of people. Their objective is to minister to and spread the message of salvation to people who they encounter, starting with people in their community. This mentality leads them to provide almost any type of social and community service and run several, very different kinds of services at the same time.

Evangelical churches' desire to be a witness for Christ in their communities also results in concern for the provision of high quality services because they believe that God requires that they give their best and because they want the high quality of their services to pique people's interest in Christianity. The Bible instructs: "... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your father in heaven. (Mathew 5:16)." And PSC, FCC, CLJ all strive to provide high quality services that make a positive statement about Jesus Christ. They measure the quality of their services by the quality of their staff, the long waiting lists for their services, the referrals their beneficiaries give to their friends, and the praise they receive from the people who they serve, particularly the praises they receive from people who hold different religious beliefs.

Another benefit churches like CLJ, FCC, and PSC can provide the community are services that are managed with integrity. All three churches are keenly aware of the fact that their actions and the actions of their staff impacts how people in the community views Jesus Christ and Christianity. As Christ's witnesses to the community, they are careful to make sure that they do everything with integrity as commanded in the Bible, which calls for a kind of integrity that requires more than complying with laws or agreements. 2 Corinthians 6:3-4, 6-7a instructs Christians to "... put no stumbling block in any one's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way. ... in purity, understanding, patience, and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God." Because evangelical churches considers the services they provide to the community a ministry and a form of evangelism they try not to do anything that discredits their ministry or gives people a reason to reject Jesus Christ.

In addition, evangelical churches are very conscientious about using their resources wisely. They believe that everything they have and everyone under their care belong to God to whom they are accountable. “Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.” NIV Matthew 25:14-15. In order to be obedient to God and not a stumbling block for non-believers, FCC’s, PSC’s, and CLJ’s leaders seriously think about how they can be good stewards of the resources which God has entrusted to them. The intentions of the pastors of all three churches mirror those of Apostle Paul as he stated in 2 Corinthian 8 20-21: “We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.”

However, because evangelical churches are not social services agencies but are churches whose primary commitments are to God, His word, and fulfilling the role of a church their level of activity in the community, particularly with regards to traditional forms of political activism, can be severely limited. Even though evangelical churches believe it is important to be outward focused and reach out to the community through services, the churches do not want to commit so many of its resources to other activities that their primary role of discipleship is compromised. FCC, PSC, and CLJ consider “discipleship”, which focuses on teaching people to be imitators of Christ, helping them understand the meaning of what the Bible says, and encouraging them to apply what they learn to their lives so that each person can grow to become a Christian whose character and life imitates the life of Christ as its primary and most important function. For this reason, many evangelical churches, particularly ones that are new or have a large transient population, end up spending much of their resources and time on “discipling” people and not necessarily on providing services to the community.

In addition, evangelical churches’ “unconventional” ways of making decisions about programming as well as their insistence on the freedom to express and share their religious beliefs can make partnerships with non-evangelical community organizations more difficult, but not impossible. The key is for community organizations to first understand what is important to evangelical churches and then offer them the kinds of partnerships that acknowledge and respect their interests, motivations, and concerns.

Such “understanding” requires that CBO’s and other organizations interested in working with Evangelicals take the time to understand the theological underpinnings that shape their perspectives and make their position on personnel, political, and religious content in their programming non-negotiable. Otherwise, Evangelical churches may initially come to the table to discuss possibilities for partnerships, but they will not return and the opportunity to meet some of the needs in the community will be lost.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The case studies show that evangelical churches have a strong interest in and motivation to reach outside their church walls and serve the needs of people in their community. The findings also confirm that evangelical churches' theological views limit their participation in political activism, and the kinds of partnerships into which they are willing to enter. Given evangelical churches' flexibility in programming, high quality of services, integrity of the leadership, willingness to take on risks, and willingness to invest a considerable amount of its own resources, a community has much to gain by engaging and working with the evangelical churches in their community.

Despite the limitations that evangelical churches' theological beliefs and values place on their involvement in political activism and the kinds of partnership they are willing to enter, the case studies also show that there is considerable amount of room for community organizations to work with evangelical churches to meet the array of needs in urban communities under the right circumstances. Consequently, community organizations cannot "capitalize" on the many benefits that evangelical churches have to offer until they understand and respect evangelical churches' interests, recognize what they have to offer, and are willing to allow them to retain their identity and values.

In order for community organizations to partner with evangelical churches they must understand and respect the interests, motivations, and decision-making style of the evangelical churches. Evangelical churches are cautious about partnerships with non-evangelical organizations because they believe that they are called to be in the world but not of it, and they do not want to commit to anything that compromises their theological beliefs and values. Consequently, it is critical that evangelical churches have full confidence that by agreeing to work with another organization they will not have to compromise their identity as Christians or their values. They need to know that the relationship does not obligate the church to return a favor or imply their churches' support for the organization's agenda or political objective. They also need to know that the organization is not going to expect decision-making power over the programming or operation of the new service because retaining full control over the decision regarding the service is how evangelical churches protect themselves against compromise.

Community organizations need to understand and respect the motivation behind evangelical churches' activity in the community. Evangelical church members are motivated by their desire to share Christ's love and their desire to share the message of salvation with people in the community. This love and message is what they believe make their services special and give them the power to really help the people they serve. Any requirements that restrict their staff and volunteers to born-again Christians or prevent them from offering some form of religious activity strips them of what they think makes their

services valuable and effective. It also strips them of the motivation that drives them to provide the service. For these reasons, preventing evangelical churches from restricting staff and volunteers to Christians who share the churches' beliefs and values, practicing relational evangelism, offering to pray with people they serve when it seems appropriate, or inviting them church activities will never be acceptable.

As part of their effort to develop an understanding of the motivations behind evangelical churches' positions on these issues and to have a more informed dialogue with them, organizations interested in working with evangelical churches should familiarize themselves with the terminology evangelical churches use and the theological significance of some of these terms. Otherwise, these organizations will miss or underestimate the importance of some of the issues or concerns that evangelical church leaders raise while discussing future partnership opportunities, and cause them to fail to identify alternative solutions that might be acceptable to both parties.

In addition, community organizations need to understand and respect the fact that evangelical churches pursue community development activities when the Holy Spirit leads someone in the church or the leadership of the church to have a sustained, passionate interest in that ministry. Evangelical churches are not interested in just doing anything in the community. They are interested in having what they do in the community be God's will for the individuals from the congregation who are involved and for the church. This is why evangelical churches make decisions based on prayer and whether someone receives a calling from God. As a result, community organizations have to give evangelical churches room and time to pray about opportunities they present. Community organizations should also make it clear to evangelical churches that they understand that their decision is going to be based on a calling and whether they believe pursuing the partnership or service is God's will for the church.

Finally, before pursuing a partnership with evangelical churches community organizations will also have to come to terms with the fact that these services may lead to the sharing of the gospel, invitations to church services or Bible studies, and perhaps people's conversion to Christianity. Supporting the work of evangelic churches will also require that community organizations to trust the evangelical churches since it is highly unlikely that non-Christian community members will be part of the decision-making body that design and operates the services. If community organizations are willing to accept these conditions in exchange for the services that evangelical churches are willing to provide, then there is considerable room for partnerships between community organizations and evangelical churches, as well as opportunities for community organizations to increase and influence evangelical churches' engagement in the community.

As complex and difficult as identifying a partnership that meets all the above conditions may sound, the case studies reveal that these kinds of partnerships are possible. In fact, the stories about how several

of the services provided by PSC, FCC, and CLJ came about reveal several concrete ways in which community organizations and government agencies can work with evangelical churches to encourage and influence their engagement in the community.

One kind of partnership can be based on education. Organizations could partner with evangelical churches to educate congregation members on different issues and needs in the community. Evangelical churches are sincerely interested in trying to address the real needs of people in their community and providing for unmet needs. Although some churches and people within the churches are more aware than others of the needs in their communities, organizations with specialized knowledge or ones that are more familiar with the myriad of services that are provided in the community could help evangelical churches identify specific needs in the community that they could address, provide members of the congregation the tools they need to make thoughtful programmatic decisions, and give them concrete ideas for ways in which they can begin to address specific needs in the community. Education is extremely important because evangelical churches tend to rely on the interests of their congregation members to identify services and organizations that they will either operate themselves or support. Increasing congregation members' knowledge of the needs in the community and ways in which they can help meet those needs can help develop that interest and perhaps in result in evangelical churches' increased level of activity in the community.

FCC's Ocean Lodge Ministry is a perfect example of how secular organizations can influence the development of critical services to help people in a community. The Massachusetts Coalition on Homelessness played a significant role in the development of the ministry because it took the time and initiative to inform churches like FCC about the families living in Ocean Lodge Motel, educated them about the problems these families were facing, and gave them concrete ideas about how FCC could help the homeless families living in the motel. After FCC's congregation members prayed about the information they received, they felt called to start a ministry and began by doing exactly what Massachusetts Coalition on Homelessness had suggested- they delivered hot, home-cooked meals to each families once a week and developed friendships with them.

PSC had, on its own initiative, devoted time to learn about the needs of families in the Beacon Hill/Back Bay community because it was trying to determine what kinds of services it could provide the community. Having learned about the community's needs, they moved forward to respond. Community organizations may be able to help speed processes like this along and encourage the development of additional services by simply providing evangelical churches information on various needs in the community and gaps in services.

The second kind of partnership that CBOs and the government can pursue is one that combines education and funding. The case studies show that evangelical churches are willing to accept funds or

products from other organizations that enable them to provide services to the community. What is problematic are the “strings” that come with the money. “Strings” such as reporting requirements, standard performance requirements, filling out paperwork, and even ones that do not allow the churches to preach a sermon or require people to participate in religious programming are usually acceptable. It is the “strings” that force evangelical churches to compromise their identity and values, strip them of the value they believe they have to offer, or remove volunteers’ deeper motivations which is to share the love of Christ and the message of salvation with the people they help will never be acceptable to evangelical churches.

However, several examples in the case studies show that there are ways for secular organizations and evangelical churches to forge partnerships that are acceptable to all the parties involved. CBOs and other organizations seeking to work with evangelical churches can establish these partnerships by approaching evangelical churches, and showing them that their unique interests and strengths evangelical churches have to offer to the community and the proposed service are valued. They can provide the impetus such as education about specific needs in the community or a social problem, particular program ideas, as well as funding to get a program started. If the nature of the partnership enables evangelical churches to retain their identity, share their faith through relationship evangelism, have control of hiring practices, they will be willing to entertain the idea.

The partnership between CLJ, The Nellie Mae Foundation, Higher Education Information Center to create HERC is a model of how CBOs and governments can partner with evangelical churches by providing both education and funding to create a much needed service to the community while enabling churches to retain their autonomy and evangelistic goals. The Nellie Mae Foundation and the Higher Education Information Center are secular and government-related organizations that do not share the same theological values as CLJ. However, they were able to form a powerful partnership that has been a positive experience for all the organization involved and has positively impacted the future of hundreds of Boston’s youth.

These community organizations took the first step and approached churches, presented information on the problem they were seeking to address as well as a concrete the idea of creating a higher education resource center, verbally recognized and identified the ways in which churches could add value to the service, and left the invitation open to churches that were interested in operating a HERC to apply. In addition, to presenting the idea, The Nellie Mae Foundation also offered to provide funding to help with operating costs.

A critical component to making the partnership work was that The Nellie Mae Foundation allowed CLJ to express itself, retain their identity, and gave CLJ the freedom to pursue its evangelistic goals. The fact that CLJ’s proposal to The Nellie Mae Foundation contains a lot of “spiritual” and “Christian”

language and that CLJ was selected to run HERC is significant. As the case study shows, the CLJ's partnership with "secular" organizations did not impact its ability to have full control over the hiring process and requirements for staff and volunteers, communicate a Christian world-view, and practice relational evangelism through its mentorship program. In return, CLJ has provided an excellent education resource center that serves approximately 450 students a year and has been recognized by the Mayor of Boston, the President of The College Board, The Christian Science Monitor, and the youth who participate in HERC's programs.

The third kind of partnership is one in which community organizations informally support the work evangelical churches are doing in the community in the form of political support or technical assistance. Recognizing the benefits that an evangelical church can provide, other community organizations can support the efforts of these churches by supporting any governmental approvals the churches might need to provide the services. If organizations have specialized knowledge, especially if it is related to grant-writing or complying with government regulations they could help speed the process of developing a new service for the community by volunteering their expertise.

The informal partnership between FCC, the residents of Revere and the state regulator is an example of how very different groups in a community can work with evangelical churches to serve a need in the community. Critical support and help from people outside the church significantly contributed to FCC's ability to open the only day care center in the City of Revere and serve low-income families. It was the help of the State regulator who translated the government regulations into layman's terms and provided FCC with affordable alternatives to the medications it needed to make to its church building to receive a license from the State to run the day care center. The political support that the community provided FCC after its first year in operation helped change the government's original denial of FCC's application for government funded day care slots. As a result, the City of Revere was able to have a day care center that served the neediest families in its community.

Implications for Government

The future of partnerships between the government and evangelical churches will depend on how the government resolves the outstanding issues surrounding its financial support of services provided by FBOs. Evangelical churches do not approach partnerships with the government differently from the way they approach partnerships with other organizations. Some Evangelical churches may be more skeptical about the reliability of government funding than others, but they do not require anything more from partnerships with the government than they do from other organizations. The problem is, that unlike private organizations, the government has been unable to provide definitive answers on issues that are critical to Evangelical churches' ability to decide whether they will partner with the government.

If the government wants more Evangelical congregations to apply for government funding it is going to have to settle the questions related to FBOs rights to select staff and volunteers based on their religious beliefs and values. The fierce debates on whether the protections provided to religious institutions by the first amendment regarding FBOs' hiring practices carry over to hiring practices for programs that are partially funded by the government have yet to be settled. The responses of all three case studies show that Evangelical churches need to have the right to restrict staff and volunteers to Christians. The case studies also revealed that all three churches believe that homosexuality is clearly prohibited in the Bible. Consequently, the government will also have to settle the question of whether FBOs will be exempt from local laws that prohibit discrimination against homosexuals and laws that require organizations to pay benefits to homosexual employees' domestic partners.

The government will also have to clarify what it means by proselytization and whether some forms of proselytization are permissible. Recent faith-based legislation has made it clear that religious expression in the form of religious symbols, artwork, posters are acceptable. However, there is a lack of clarity on whether activities such as offering to pray with someone, sharing the gospel during a personal conversation between a staff person and client, or inviting beneficiaries to church functions are prohibited forms of proselytization. Green and Sherman's research found that the biggest problem with government contracts was the failure to include language that clearly defined what kinds of activities were permissible and what was prohibited. Since Evangelical churches' goals of evangelism are integrally tied to their community development activities, the government must put these questions to rest before many Evangelic congregations can determine whether they are willing to accept government funds.

While Evangelic churches are comfortable with regulations that prohibit churches from forcing people to attend religious activities, making conversion a pre-condition for obtaining service, or preaching sermons to beneficiaries, Evangelic churches do need to be able to practice relational evangelism. As a result, if the government decides that relational evangelism is unacceptable, most Evangelical churches will not pursue government funding.

Despite the fact that evangelical churches have very strong positions on the above issues which could make or break any possibility of partnerships with the government, it is clear that evangelical churches are not going to become politically active to advocate for changes to Charitable Choice or faith-based legislation that would make their service programs eligible for government funding or better match their interests. The closest evangelical churches may get to advocating for any changes or clarifications in these regulations would be supporting a Christian parachurch organization that represents their interests to government agencies.

Conclusion

The goal of this thesis was to clarify what statements like “FBOs are willing to enter into partnerships, accept funding, or pursue activities that allow them to carry out their mission and do not interfere or conflict with their basic religious principles” means when applied to Evangelical churches and to identify what Evangelical churches have to offer communities. The hope was that this information could help CBOs and government agencies determine whether they would be interested in partnering with Evangelical churches and understand what conditions would make partnerships viable.

The study shows that Evangelical churches’ approach community development activities in ways that could result in benefits for a community. They provide communities an opportunity to have many of its needs addressed by an institution that seeks to provide high quality services that is delivered with love to whomever needs help. They offer communities tremendous flexibility in programming, a willingness and deep interest in meeting the gaps in services in a community, and a willingness to take on organizational risks. They are also willing to completely change the services they provide in order to fill those gaps.

The more complex question was whether evangelical churches and community organizations could work together to meet the myriad of needs in their communities. The case studies show that Evangelical churches’ theological beliefs impact their decisions related to providing services in the community do make partnerships more difficult; however, the issues that their theological beliefs raise do not create a wall between non-evangelical organizations and Evangelical churches. Although a superficial look at these issues make it seem as if partnerships between most non-Evangelical Christian organizations and Evangelical churches are impossible, a deeper examination reveals that there are many opportunities for partnerships.

The door is open for those who are willing to take Evangelical churches’ interests, motivations, and theological beliefs seriously and not force them to compromise their values. This means that potential partners need to allow Evangelical churches to practice relational evangelism, give Evangelical churches full control over their hiring practices and policies, and design services that enable the church to treat its clients with respect. The relationship cannot diminish the churches’ autonomy to design the program, imply support for the partnering agencies’ agenda, or require the Evangelical church to return a favor or participate in an activity in which the church feels that it is being disrespectful to the government. Within these boundaries, there are a variety of ways that Evangelical churches and non-Evangelical organizations can forge viable partnerships. However, CBOs and other organizations interested in partnering with evangelical churches must make the first move.

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LIST OF INTERVIEWS

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 Omar, Youth Pastor

First Congregational Church in Revere

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 Carl Mucci, leader of Angels for the Elderly
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